Armed men abduct US soldier in C. Luzon

STORY ON PAGE A2

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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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TRABAHO NA KAYO AGAD, BAH!

Crunch time for Senate neophytes

By D. Pazzibugan and G. Lacuarta

IT'S crunch time for the neophyte senators.

Ex-broadcaster Noli de Castro is still in the throes of a

CRUNCH/ A6

GMA admits power bill not a cure-all

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Volt Contreras

WITH the power reform bill now only awaiting her signature to become law, President Macapagal-Arroyo can now speak realistically of the controversial Electricity Power Reform Act.

The measure is not the cure-all for high elec-

GMA/ A6

COMELEC Chair Benipayo (center) proclaims 11 of the 13 newly elected senators: From left, President Macapagal, Honasan, Flavier, Pangilinan, Drilon, Villar, Estrada, de Castro, Magsaysay, Angara, Lacson and Recto. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

NO. 1 Senator-elect Noli de Castro prods Senator-elect Loi Estrada to stand beside President Macapagal during the proclamation rites at the Philippine Plaza. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

New fighting erupts; 2 more soldiers killed

By Julie Alipala-Inot
PDI Mindanao Bureau
Carlito Pablo and Martin P. Marfil

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Fighting flared anew yesterday morning between government troops and fleeing Abu Sayyaf bandits at Barangay Upper Sinangkapan in Tuburan, Basilan, leaving two more soldiers dead and several others wounded.

Col. Lino Horacio Lapinid, spokesperson of the Southern Command media bureau, said the bandits fled "southeast," in the direction of "either Tipo-Tipo or the Sumisip area."

Basilan Rep. Gerry Salapuddin said the bandits could be on their way to the Sampinit Complex in Sumisip town, a known stronghold of the Abu Sayyaf.

"But our troops in the field—soldiers of the 55th Infantry Battalion, backed by members of the 32nd IB—are keeping track of them," Lapinid said.

He said the soldiers had recovered pieces of clothing believed to belong to the bandits' hostages at the clash site.

Salapuddin said the firefight was reported around 9 a.m.

"There was also a reported landing of 100 armed men, a reinforcement from Sulu led by (Galib Andang alias) Commander Robot. They reportedly landed at Sitio Kapago, Barangay Candiis, also in Tuburan," Salapuddin said.

The clash site is about seven kilometers from where the armed men were said to have landed yesterday at dawn.

Lapinid identified those killed as a Sergeant Sulatan and a Private Rafols, both of the 55th IB.

He named two of the "undetermined number of wounded" as a Lieutenant Muti and a Private

NEW FIGHTING/ A20

Basilan gov says Romero kin paid ₱10M

By Dona Pazzibugan and Carlito Pablo

THE FAMILY of businessman Reghis Romero II paid his Abu Sayyaf captors at least P10 million in ransom, but this was done without the knowledge of the government, Basilan Gov. Wahab Akbar told reporters in Manila yesterday.

Akbar said the ransom was paid a day before the military engaged the Abu Sayyaf bandits in a fierce firefight in the municipality of Lamitan last Saturday. He said the Abu Sayyaf released Romero during that firefight to hide the fact that they earned a lot of money.

Reacting to Akbar's claim, President Macapagal-Arroyo said news reports had already quoted Romero's family as having denied paying any ransom.

Armed Forces spokesperson Brig. Gen.

BASILAN/ A20

New senators proclaimed but who's the 'lucky 13th'?

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

THE COMMISSION on Elections proclaimed yesterday the 13 newly elected senators, but the wait has just begun for the final tally that will determine who between Gregorio Honasan and Ralph Recto will get a three-year term.

Honasan and Recto, belonging to the opposing camps of the Puwersa ng Masa and People Power Coalition, respectively, found themselves seated beside each other at the proclamation ceremonies in the Westin Philippine Plaza but they never exchanged a word.

The 13th placer will serve for three years, the unfinished term of former Sen. Teofisto Guingona, who is now the Vice President. The rest will serve six-year terms.

Based on the present standings as stated in the National Board of Canvassers' Resolution 01-005 proclaiming the winners, Recto was in 12th place with 10,387,108 votes and Honasan in 13th place with 10,364,272, a difference of only 22,836 votes.

But even former first lady Loi Ejercito, who is in 11th place with 10,456,674 votes, is not yet assured of a six-year term.

She leads Recto by 69,566 votes and Honasan by 92,402 with 285,000 votes from Lanao del Sur still to be canvassed.

Former Immigration Commissioner Rufus Rodriguez, counsel for Ejercito, admitted that the 11th to 13th positions were "still tentative," although he filed a petition yesterday asking the Comelec to void the 98,000 votes which were allegedly padded to Recto in eight towns of Maguindanao.

"Nothing is definite yet," Rodriguez said. "If they are going to tamper with the results in Lanao del Sur, then we should expect Recto to overtake Ejercito," he said.

Honasan, interviewed after the proclamation,

NEW SENATORS/ A6

MARTIAL LAW

Gloria ponders her options

By Martin P. Marfil and Cathy Yamsuan

SHOULD a state of emergency be declared or martial law imposed in Basilan to put an end to the Abu Sayyaf problem?

That is the question bugging President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The President yesterday noted that a state of emergency would have to be authorized by Congress but martial law could come from her own initiative.

"With regard to the state of emergency, I was just reading the Constitution, Congress has to authorize me first. So that's the call of Congress," the President said in a press conference.

"With regard to martial law, that is within the prerogative of the President, at least temporarily. So we are studying the situation and we are trying to consult," she said.

The idea of declaring a state of emergency or martial law was broached the other day by Armed Forces spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan. He said the military operations in Basilan could have been made easier if martial law was imposed or a state of emergency was declared.

Reelected Sen. Franklin Drilon, the Integrated Bar of the Philippines and other groups scoffed at the suggestion of placing Basilan under martial law to neutralize the Abu Sayyaf.

Drilon and IBP president Arthur Lim said there was no constitutional basis for a declaration of martial law.

They reminded the government that

GLORIA/ A20

Ragtag band running circles around military

BOASTING a modern arsenal bought with ransom money, the ragtag bandit group Abu Sayyaf is running circles around the poorly equipped military as it tries to free American and Filipino hostages.

The military has been on the receiving end of criticism from the public and media following a failed rescue attempt in Lamitan town on Basilan island, where the rebels broke through a siege with their captives.

Hundreds of troops, backed by armor and air power, had ringed a hospital and church where the gunmen were holed up with nine captives they seized from the Dos Palmas Resort in Palawan on May 27.

But the Abu Sayyaf sneaked through the cordon under the cover of darkness on Saturday.

The military is also being criticized for failing to pounce on the Abu Sayyaf at sea when they were transporting the captives across a 500-kilometer expanse of water from Palawan to Basilan in the south.

Armed Forces spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan said the

RAGTAG/ A20

CAUGHT in the crossfire. Uncertainty and fear are etched on the faces of these civilians in Lamitan, Basilan, as sporadic clashes continue to erupt between the Abu Sayyaf and the pursuing government forces. DENNIS SABANGAN

BAKA KINDHA NG ENKANTADA?

GI lost in Pinatubo: Missing or abducted?

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—A United States serviceman was reported missing last night after armed men attacked a group of US and Filipino soldiers who were on a tour of Mt. Pinatubo.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has ordered a search for the missing serviceman, Lt JG Scott Washburn, a participant in the ongoing Philippine-US Carat 2001 joint military exercises.

Elmer Cato, Presidential Commission on the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFAcom) spokesman, confirmed that Washburn and four other US servicemen, with four Philippine Navy escorts, were on their way down from Pinatubo when about 10 armed men, assisted by Aetas, opened fire and disarmed them at Sapang Bato, about 4 km west of the Clark Economic Zone in Angeles City.

Washburn's eight companions were reported last night to be safely back at the Carat 2001 headquarters at Clark.

Their release bolstered Cato's and the Northern Luzon Command's belief that Washburn may not have been abducted but may just be in hiding.

Maj. Gen. Rodolfo Garcia, the Army's Northern Luzon Command chief, said "nobody has been abducted" in the Mt. Pinatubo area.

Cato could not say if New People's Army rebels, who are known to operate in the area, were behind the incident.

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao, citing military reports, also said it was "unlikely" that the American was abducted.

Tiglao said the armed group, which intercepted the US servicemen demanded only the firearms of the Filipino guides and in fact succeeded in getting them.

But he said that during the confusion, one of the five Americans ran away while his four companions remained safe and unharmed.

"If they were indeed communist rebels who wanted to abduct the Americans, then why were the four Americans spared? It is likely the American serviceman got lost when he ran away," Tiglao said.

Still, he said, the President was concerned and has ordered that a search be conducted for the missing US serviceman.

Cato said Vice President Teofisto Guingona has ordered the VFAcom team, which was in Subic monitoring the Carat 2001 exercises, to proceed immediately to Clark and help in the search.

According to Cato, the US servicemen and their Philippine Navy escorts, all wearing civilian clothes, were on a rest and recreation break.

They took the route up the barren mountain from the back of Clark.

"It was when they were on their way down that they were fired upon by the armed men," Cato said.

The armed men, carrying short weapons, seized two M-16 Armalite rifles carried by the Filipino Navy men, he said.

The group was held by the armed men and released after an hour.

Cato said the group broke up as they ran for their lives.

He could not explain, however, why the armed men agreed to release their captives. *Reports from Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk, Rocky Nazareno and Juliet Labog-Javellana*

Asia News picture service goes live

BEIJING—The Asia News Network Picture Service will go live today, with member newspapers exchanging news photographs on a daily basis.

During trials, the photograph exchange will be accessible only to members. After trials, the picture service—which will offer up to 60 news photographs every day from across Asia—will be made available to subscribers all around the world.

This was one of several decisions taken by the executive board of ANN at its meeting in Beijing last week.

Japan's Daily Yomiuri and Yomiuri Shimbun were formally inducted into the network at the meeting. With this, ANN now comprises 12 newspapers from 10 Asian countries. Member newspapers cumulatively sell close to 13 million copies every day.

Other members of the network are: China Daily (China), The Statesman (India), The Jakarta Post (Indonesia), The Korea Herald (Korea), The Star and Sin Chew Jit Poh (Malaysia), Philippine Daily Inquirer (Philippines), The Straits Times (Singapore), The Nation (Thailand) and Viet Nam News (Vietnam).

The executive board also decided to go ahead with other plans for business cooperation. These include the setting up of an ANN portal, and the publication of a special supplement on tourism in September.

ANN is a media initiative that was born in March 1999. It is supported by the Manila-based Asia Media Project of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. *Philippine Daily Inquirer/Asia News Network*

Palace denies harassing Ping on Dacer slays

By Juliet L. Javellana

MACALAÑANG yesterday denied that senator-elect Panfilo Lacson was being harassed when a newly-arrested official of the defunct task force he once headed had named him as the mastermind the killing of public relations man Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver Manuel Corbito.

"There is no harassment whatsoever. We are just recounting what the witness Major (Glenn) Dumlao said," Justice Secretary Hernando Perez said in the weekly press conference of President Macapagal-Arroyo and the Cabinet in Malacañang.

After he was arrested by police, Dumlao, official of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force, was said to have executed an affidavit linking Lacson to the grisly kidnap-slaying.

"Major Dumlao was a part of PAOCTF. And his statement could not be disregarded by the Department of Justice," Perez said.

Perez said the government would pursue the double murder case even after Lacson has been proclaimed senator.

"Yes, there is no exemption granted to anyone who has been elected to public office," Perez said.

Lacson was among the 13 proclaimed by the Commission on Elections yesterday as winners of the recent senatorial elections.

The President attended the proclamation at the Westin Philippine Plaza where she had her first face to face meeting with Lacson, Gregorio Honasan and Loi Estrada since the May 1 siege of Malacañang by Estrada supporters which forced her to declare a state of rebellion.

Lacson, Honasan and losing reelectionists Juan Ponce Enrile and Miriam Santiago were among those the government accused of fomenting the rebellion.

Honasan and Lacson said they plan to question the "prudence" of government's threats to file rebellion charges against them..

"We plan to raise these issues in the Senate itself, through a Senate investigation, and if necessary we will raise this in the Commission on Appointments," Honasan told a news conference prior to his proclamation as one of the 13 senators who won in the May 14 polls.

Asked whether he will make it hard to confirm the appointment of Perez, he said: "No, we will deal with issues. Now if that is considered making it hard for them, I guess all nominees will have to respond to questions from the commission."

He stressed there was nothing personal, or he was not issuing threats by these statements. *With Christine Avendano*

Public defender wants rebellion raps dropped

A PUBLIC lawyer has asked the Department of Justice to drop rebellion charges filed against her poor clients in connection with the frustrated siege of Malacañang on May 1.

Persida Acosta, chief of the Public Attorneys' Office, argued that her clients had no capability of toppling the government, albeit their participation in the early morning attack at the Palace that time.

Acosta's 59 poor clients were among those who were arrested immediately after the melee and charged with rebellion while detained at the Western Police District headquarters.

They were later put in the custody of Pampanga Gov. Lito Lapid.

In a counter-affidavit submitted to the DOJ, Acosta said her clients were no match to the firepower of the law enforcers and soldiers tasked to protect President Macapagal-Arroyo.

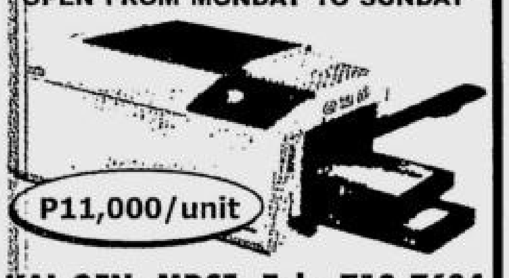
DOJ Secretary Hernando Perez was the one who spearheaded the charging of rebellion charges against those who stormed Malacañang as well as opposition leaders who allegedly incited them to join the attack

Thousands of sympathizers of jailed ex-president Joseph Estrada gathered at the Edsa Shrine for several days after he was arrested for plunder on April 25.

In the wee hours of May 1, senatorial candidates of Puwersa ng Masa allegedly encouraged them to surround Malacañang, purportedly to force President Macapagal-Arroyo to leave.

A series of violent encounters between rallyists and law enforcers ensued when Estrada's supporters arrived at the Palace gates, causing the President to declare a state of rebellion in Metro Manila from that time until the next six days.

Acosta's 59 clients were among those who were arrested on the spot on suspicion of participation in the bloody attack.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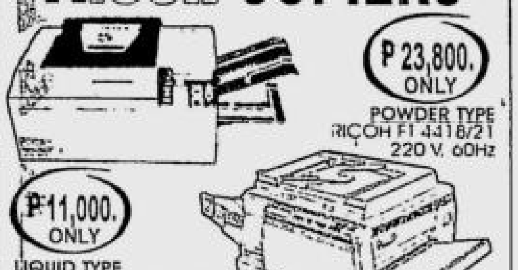
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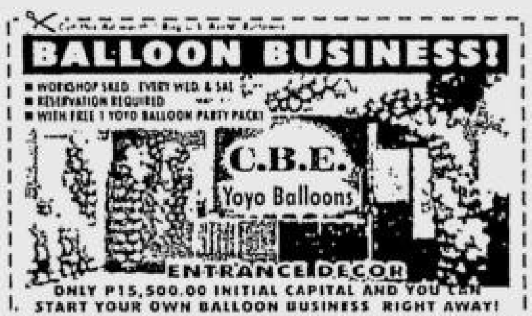
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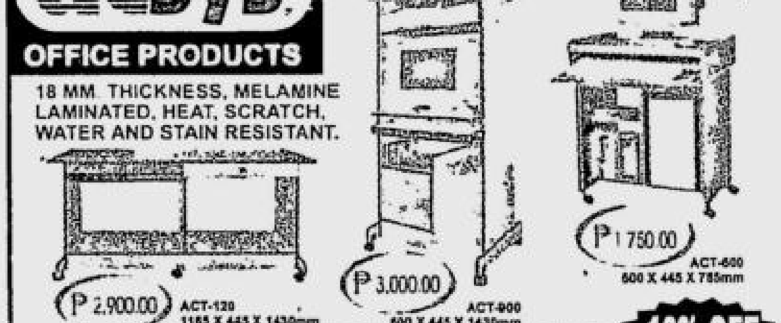
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Gloria prays for supportive leadership in Senate, House

BY JULIET L. JAVELLANA

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has not decided on whether to play an active role in the selection of the next Senate President and Speaker of the House. But she said the support of the leadership of the 12th Congress is important to her administration.

"I haven't thought about it frankly. I have to pray about those things," the President said in a press conference when asked if she would manifest the one vote that is widely known to influence the leadership race.

Though the legislature is an independent co-equal branch of the Executive, Malacañang often plays a pivotal role in the selection of its leaders.

Ms Macapagal, a senator before she became Vice President and then President, admits that her administration needs a supportive Congress.

"Well it's important that the leadership supports me. Yes, that is important," she said.

Members of the ruling party Lakas-NUCD, of which the President is titular head, are actively seeking the Senate presidency and the Speakership of the 12th Congress, which is set to open on July 23.

After yesterday's press conference, the President went to the Westin Philippine Plaza Hotel to witness the proclamation of the 13 senators-elect, which included ousted President Joseph Estrada's wife Loi and allies.

Though she went straight to the presidential table at the Mindanao room, the President smiled and clapped as the 13 senators-elect were called on stage and individually given the certificate of proclamation.

Loi, who was dressed in a peach blouse and black skirt, smiled and bowed toward the President who smiled back and clapped after Loi received the certificate.

The two ladies then stood beside each other during the photo session although the President moved to the extreme right when it was time to raise the hands of the winners.

The President also clapped and smiled as Panfilo Lacson and Gregorio Honasan, who were among those accused of rebellion by the Macapagal administration, were called.

Asked earlier how she felt about Loi's victory, Ms Macapagal had said that she has to "respect the will of the people."

During the press conference yesterday, the President was asked her personal opinion about Estrada's wish to attend the proclamation of Loi.

'Anybody but JDV'

BY V. CONTRERAS

WHILE the camp of former Speaker Jose de Venecia claims he now has the numbers to retake the post in the 12th Congress, he is facing stiff opposition from one of the architects of People Power 2.

The Council on Philippine Affairs is openly campaigning against De Venecia's reelection to the House speakership.

"We support anybody but Joe de Venecia," said Copa chair William Esposo in a faxed press statement.

Esposo said Copa believes that the come-backing veteran from Pangasinan and "his brand of politics are now irrelevant to the post-Edsa 2 scene," in which "new politics" should now prevail.

"President Macapagal, the beneficiary of Edsa 2, owes it to the people who placed her in office to have a new speaker that embodies the new politics that she likes to wave as a trademark of sorts of her administration," Espose stressed.

But in perfect repulsion of Copa's anti-JDV spiel, his House allies yesterday claimed that up to 140 congressmen, including incoming party-list representatives, are now rooting for him.

The other emerging contenders for the speakership are Rep. Raul Gonzalez of Iloilo City, Vicente Sandoval of Palawan, Prospero Pichay of Surigao del Sur, Gilbert Teodoro of Tarlac, and Florencio Abad of Batanes.

Esposo said Copa wants the next speaker to come from the People's Power Coalition and "not from anywhere else."

This was because "we are aware of the political deals that First Gentleman Mike Arroyo did with Danding Cojuangco, and we in Copa felt that Danding and his NPC belong to the opposition party."

"Horse-trading was the hallmark of (De Venecia's) term as Speaker. Pork barrel was his currency," the Copa statement added.

"(He) has had his run. He should know when the nation wants to try another speaker. He should respect the people that made Edsa 2," it said.

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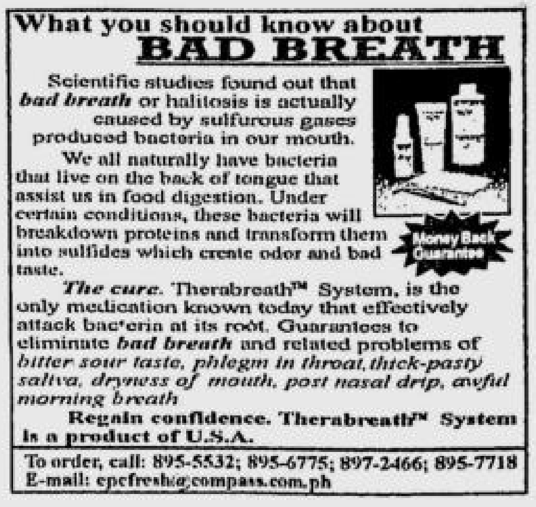
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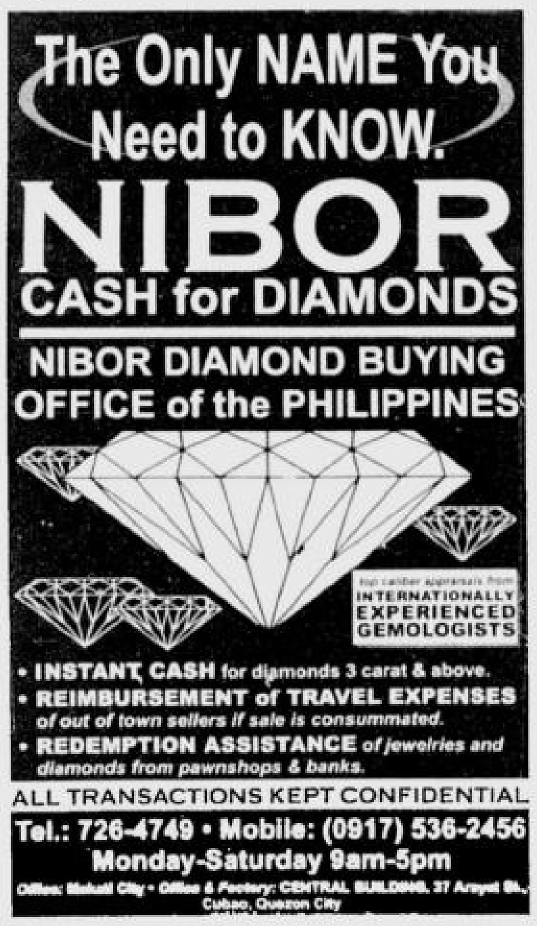
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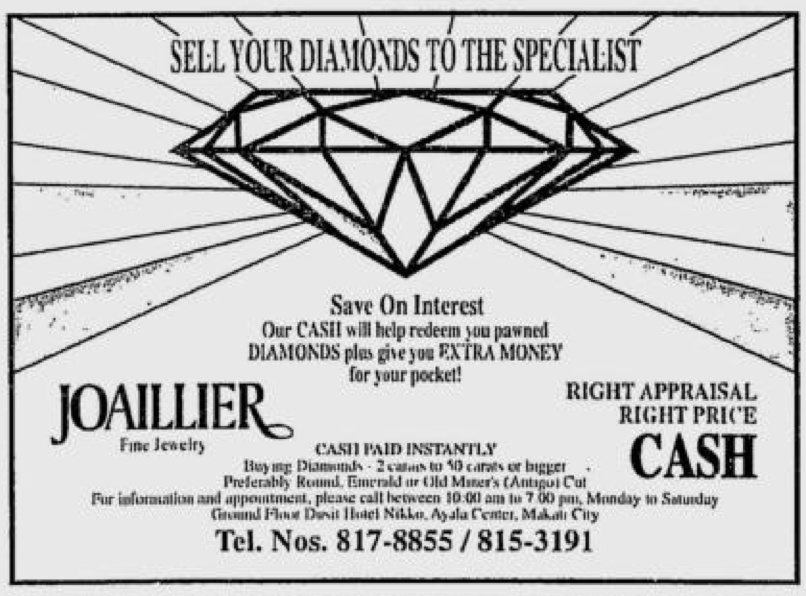
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WARNING TO MARK JIMENEZ

'Congress no haven for fugitives'

BY VOLT CONTRERAS AND ALCUIN PAPA

CAN fugitive Mark Jimenez, who managed to get himself elected as a congressman, find a haven in the House of Representatives?

Not if administration Rep. Robert Ace Barbers can help it.

"Congress is not a haven for fugitives," said Barbers, chiding seven of his colleagues for declaring "too early" their support for Jimenez in his bid to escape extradition to the United States.

The House should be careful not to make it appear that it had "unwittingly exonerated" Jimenez who is wanted by the US on charges of mail fraud, tax evasion and illegal campaign contributions.

A press statement, believed to have come from the Jimenez camp, came out on Monday saying that at least seven House members—former speaker Arnulfo Fuentebella, Rolex Suplico, Federico Sandoval, Prospero Pichay, Rodolfo Albano Jr., Joey Hizon and congressman-elect Willie Villarama—have thrown their support behind him.

At the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 42, Jimenez, the newly elected congressman for Manila's sixth district, left no doubt that he is banking on his election to stave off extradition.

"I love this country, I love my constituents, I love you all," he declared to wild cheers from his supporters outside the sala of Judge Guillermo Purganan who is hearing the extradition request filed by the justice department.

Jimenez had filed a counter-motion asking that a hearing be held before he is extradited and to stop his arrest.

Jimenez's lawyer Mario Bautista argued that to jail his client would deprive his constituents of representation in Congress.

Bautista said he wants his client to face the tedious extradition proceedings outside of jail as a free man while serving his three-year term as congressman.

Bautista also claimed that Jimenez was "on 24-hour security by the government as a state witness. There is practically no minute of the day that the government does not know where he is. He will not flee the country."

DOJ Undersecretary Merceditas Gutierrez said, however, that Jimenez was not under the government's witness protection program as a possible witness in the plunder charges against ousted President Estrada.

However, Bautista presented a supposed "secret" agreement with DOJ officials stating that his client was under its protection. But Gutierrez rejected this, saying what was presented was only a photocopied document.

Barbers said Jimenez "should speak for himself... in the proper court."

He said the House "has no business" judging the criminal liability of any government official except in impeachment proceedings.

Otherwise, he stressed, "(we) may send the wrong signals to our fellow countrymen and the international community, who must now be harboring negative perceptions of our electorate."

He said the show of support from seven of his colleagues "may be too early."

"We may be unwittingly exonerating him for fraud, tax evasion and illegal campaign contributions," he said.

"The House of Representatives or any government office must never be a refuge for fugitives from the law," he added.

During the one-hour hearing, both sides presented their rebuttals but could not substantiate them to Purganan's satisfaction, prompting the judge to order them to submit their arguments in memorandums on June 11.

Senate set to OK P11-B extra budget

BY CHRISTINE AVENDANO

THE SENATE is set to approve this week the bill that will appropriate an additional budget of P10.9 billion to fund, among other things, a five percent increase in the salary of government employees.

But senators failed to make the five percent salary hike retroactive to Jan. 1 this year because Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin told a Senate finance committee hearing yesterday that the government is short of P3.8 billion to cover this.

Instead, Sen. John Osmeña said he plans to seek the additional P3.8 billion in next year's budget. Thus, for now, government employees will have to settle for a July 1 start of the increase.

Going into the final three session days of the 11th Congress, the Senate suspended deliberation on the appropriation, which was supposed to be passed in second reading yesterday.

Sen. Sergio Osmeña III had raised questions on the insertion of P10 million in the supplemental budget, which was supposed to fund the operational requirements of the Joint Congressional Power Commission and additional operational requirements of the Senate.

Osmeña, chair of the Senate finance committee, also questioned the quorum. Initially there were 10 senators who attended the session but their numbers dwindled.

Provided you have the numbers on the floor, we can approve the supplemental budget bill, according Senate Majority Leader Francisco Tatad.

Tatad said if there were no amendments on the bill, then there was no need for the Senate to hold a bicameral meeting with the House on this. Otherwise, he said the Senate and House can still hold a bicameral meeting and finish it in one day.

Boncodin said the government would have to "sacrifice" other expenditures, like the pension of government retirees, in order to cover the additional P3.8 billion needed so that government employees will receive the pay increase retroactive on Jan. 1.

"For me if it comes to a choice between the retirees and the increase in the salaries, I will go for the retirees anytime. *Mas kawawa sila,*" she said.

Boncodin said President Macapagal-Arroyo had wanted the salary increase retroactive to Jan. 1 this year but she told her this was impossible.

She also said it was impossible to source these funds in government's revenue collections as this was also suffering a shortfall of P6 billion.

AGUILAR

Freddie Aguilar lands in jail for piracy of 'Anak'

BY DAVE VERIDIANO

SINGER-COMPOSER Freddie Aguilar was arrested yesterday by agents of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) for violation of intellectual property rights involving the internationally acclaimed song that made him famous—"Anak."

The CIDG agents arrested Aguilar at No. 5A 7th Street, New Manila, Quezon City, yesterday afternoon on the strength of a warrant for his arrest issued by a Quezon court.

Aguilar was brought directly to the office of Chief Supt. Nestorio Gualberto, CIDG director, where he was booked and then released after posting P6,000 bail.

The complaint was filed against him by his former recording company, Bayanihan Music Philippines Inc. (BAMI).

In its complaint, BAMI said Aguilar had entered into a contract whereby the singer assigned to the recording company all his rights, interests and participation of a number of his musical compositions, including "Anak," for the full term of the copyright.

The complaint said that sometime in October 1998, Aguilar entered into a license agreement with Star Cinema Productions Inc. for use of the song, including the right to record, dub and synchronize the song in relation to the motion picture in any and all media.

The singer also allegedly allowed the Star Cinema the right to use the title of the song to a movie.

BAMI said it informed Star Cinema, of its existing copyright over the song "Anak," which after having been convinced over BAMI control over musical composition, a film synchronization license agreement was entered into by BAMI and Star Cinema.

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RP, Malaysia step up border cooperation

KUALA LUMPUR—Malaysia and the Philippines are to step up their military cooperation in the wake of the mass tourist kidnapping and gun battles in a region near the border between the two countries.

Malaysia's Defense Minister Najib Razak said Tuesday that he would hold talks with Philippine defense officials in Manila later this month on "how we can increase our level of cooperation and collaboration."

Abu Sayyaf bandits abducted 20 hostages from a beach resort in Palawan on May 27. Early reports indicated the kidnappers may have been headed for jungle-clad Malaysian Borneo, which is close to southern Philippine islands.

But the kidnappers resurfaced in Basilan, a stronghold of the extremist Abu Sayyaf group. The Philippine military and the rebels have engaged in two gun battles in the last 24 hours.

Last year, the Abu Sayyaf seized 10 foreign tourists from a resort in Malaysian Borneo. Most were released after ransoms of millions of dollars were reportedly paid.

Najib said Malaysian security forces along the sea border with the Philippines had been on full alert since the latest kidnapping.

"The situation is under control," he said. "We are on full alert and we have increased our personnel and assets to deal with any eventuality," he told reporters, after holding talks with Russian Deputy Defense Minister Dmitriev Mikhail Arkadievian.

AP

Comelec suspends Lanao proclamation

THE COMMISSION on Elections en banc has suspended the proclamation of former Gov. Abdullah D. Dimaporo as congressman of the second district of Lanao del Norte.

In a resolution dated June 4, the Comelec ordered the suspension of Dimaporo's proclamation "until further orders."

The Comelec issued the order after it held in abeyance the proclamation of winning candidates in the municipality of Sultan Naga Dimaporo, which has the most number of registered voters in the province.

Sultan Naga Dimaporo proved crucial in Dimaporo's win over incumbent Rep. Abdulla S. Mangotara who won in all but three of the 23 towns of Lanao del Norte.

Mangotara questioned the election returns from Sultan Naga Dimaporo which had him getting only 477 votes against Dimaporo's 22,358.

Mangotara complained that aside from the tampered returns, voters in the town were subjected to intimidation by the Dimaporo camp.

Comelec has ordered deputy executive director for operations Pio Jose S. Joson to direct Lanao del Norte acting election supervisor Cristeto Limbaco to immediately implement its order.

Gov't, MILF to hold talks in Tripoli

By R. Nazareno

THE PHILIPPINE government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front will be holding formal peace talks in Tripoli, Libya starting June 20.

This was disclosed by Libyan ambassador Salem Adam yesterday, ending speculations on where the crucial phase of the talks will be held.

It was earlier reported that the government and MILF panels were still undecided on whether to hold the talks in Jakarta or in Kuala Lumpur.

"As of now, what we're really preparing for are the peace talks with the MILF on June 20 in Tripoli," Adam said after attending a briefing by government officials on the Abu Sayyaf situation at the Department of Foreign Affairs.

It will be the second time that Libya will play a crucial role in working for peace in the Philippines.

Tripoli also played host to the 1976 peace talks between the Philippine government and the Moro National Liberation Front that yielded the Tripoli Agreement between both sides. But the agreement was never implemented.

The Philippine government would finalize a peace agreement with the MNLF 20 years later under the administration of then President Fidel Ramos in Jakarta.

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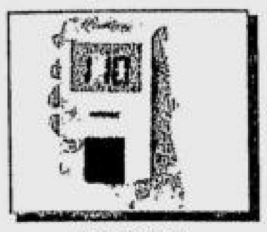

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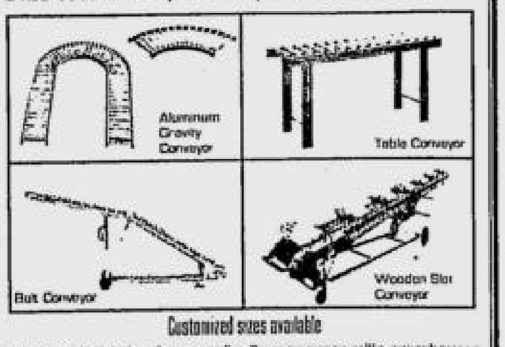

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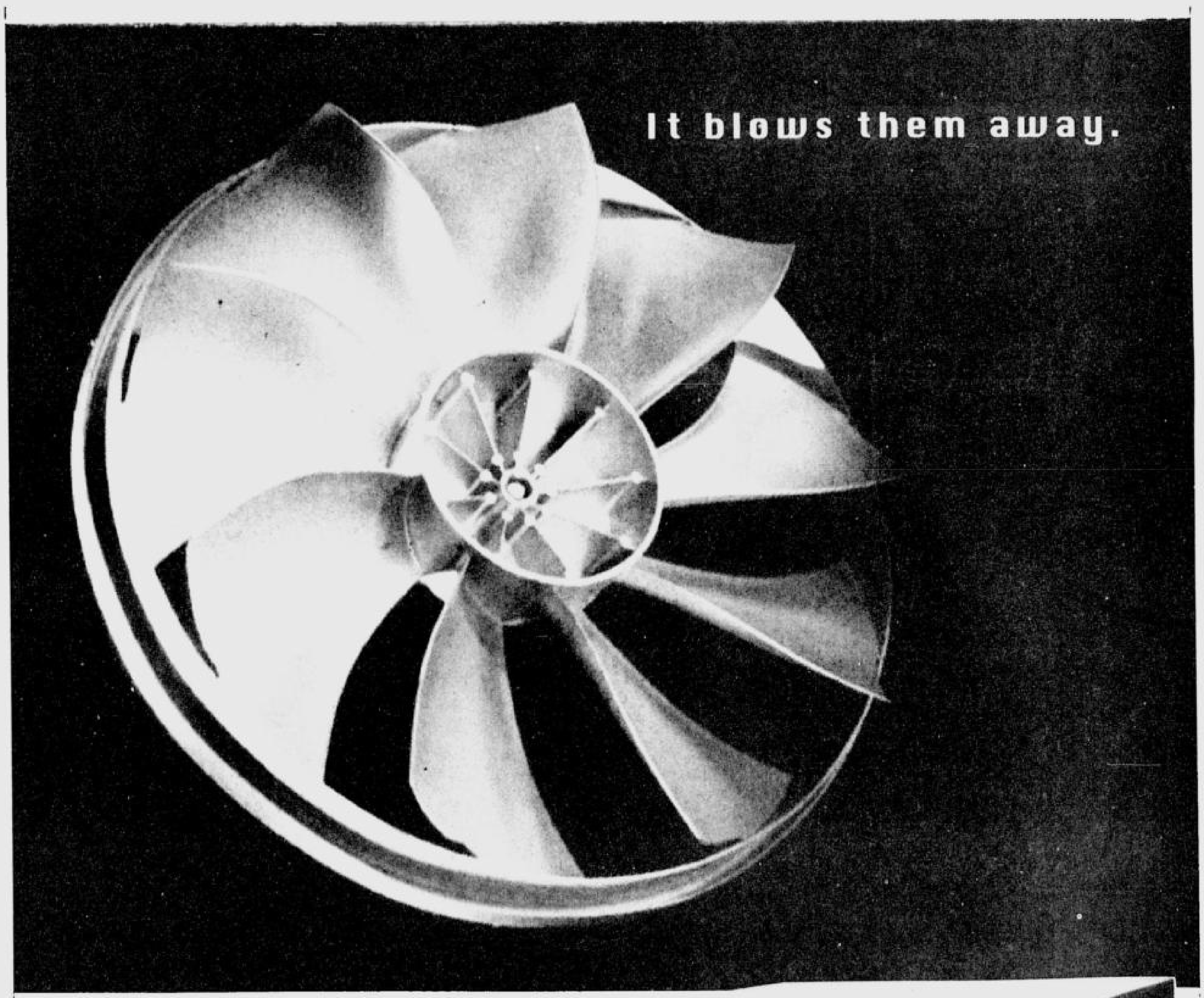

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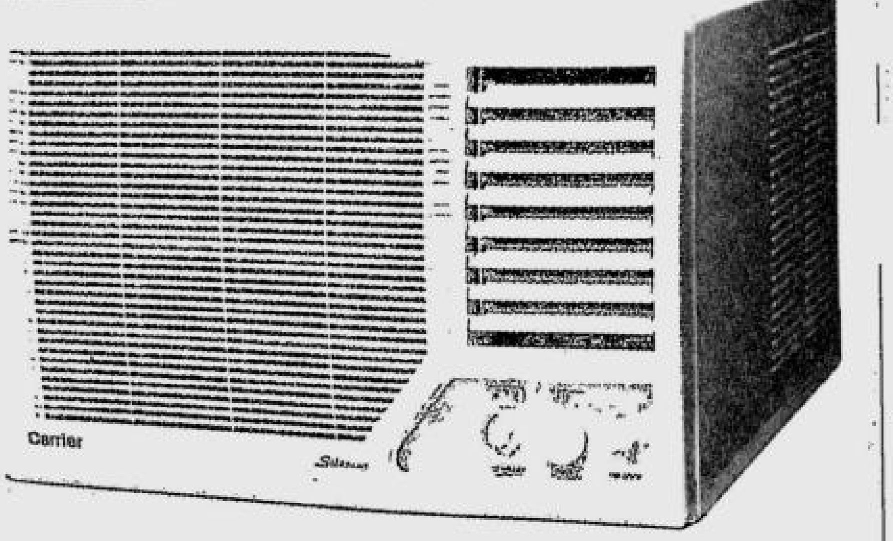

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New senators proclaimed

PRESIDENT Macapagal watches the proclamation ceremony for the new senators as Comelec Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco passes behind her. Tancangco did not sign the proclamation, saying that the canvassing was flawed. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

LUCKY 13TH. Senators-elect Ralph Recto and Gregorio Honasan smile at each other during the proclamation rites at the Philippine Plaza. The two are locked in a very close race for 12th place, which means three more years in the Senate. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

(From page A1)

said he did not mind serving for three years.

"We will continue with our legislative agenda and file the proper bills that will serve the best interest of the Filipino people," he said.

Recto expressed optimism that he would stay at No. 12 after the votes from Lanao del Sur had been canvassed. He denied that he benefited from vote padding in Mindanao.

"I'm a neophyte and I cannot possibly do that," he said "My conscience is clear."

Lanao del Sur, where canvassing has not started yet, has 294,730 registered voters but some 285,000 had actually voted, according to the Comelec. Recto said he had advanced information that he won by 15,000 to 20,000 votes in the province.

Those assured of six-year terms are, in the order of their proclamation, Noli de Castro, Juan Flavier, Sergio Osmeña III, Franklin Drilon, Ramon Magsaysay Jr., Joker Arroyo, Manuel Villar Jr., Francis Pangilinan, Edgardo Angara and Panfilo Lacson.

But the NBC, the Comelec en banc, safely worded the proclamation certificates and avoided stating the standings and the exact length of the terms of the newly proclaimed senators because the results from Lanao del Sur could still affect their standings.

The certificate merely stated that he or she got a certain number of votes as of June 4 and was being proclaimed a duly elected senator "for a term provided for under Section 2 Article 8 of the Constitution."

Arroyo and Osmeña did not attend the simple proclamation ceremonies in the Mindanao ballroom of the Westin Philippine Plaza in Pasay City. Neither of them sent representatives.

Only 6 lawyers in Senate now

By Christine Avendaño

THE NEW Senate will see fewer lawyers doing the job of churning out laws for the country.

Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. couldn't help but point this out following yesterday's proclamation of the 13 senators who won in the May 14 polls.

Pimentel, a lawyer, said there would be six senator-lawyers in the incoming 12th Congress with the departure of Senators Miriam Defensor-Santiago, Juan Ponce Enrile, Teofisto Guingona and Raul Roco.

Santiago and Enrile lost in their reelection bid, while Guingona and Roco were appointed Vice President and education secretary respectively.

Aside from Pimentel, the other lawyers in the new Senate are Franklin Drilon, Renato Cayetano, Joker Arroyo, Francis Pangilinan and Edgardo Angara.

Senators Pimentel, Cayetano and Tessie Aquino-Oreta said the presence of Enrile and Santiago, both firebrands, would be dearly missed in the Senate.

Oreta noted that Santiago made the upper house "lively" during debates.

On the bright side, she said the small number of lawyers in the Senate would mean less "legal entanglements" during debates.

Cayetano said he would miss the two senators for their intellectual discussions, as he admitted that he would study and prepare thoroughly for debates whenever Enrile and Santiago were involved.

He said he would also miss outgoing Sen. Francisco Tatad, whom he described as someone with a "tremendous grasp of the English language."

Tatad like Sen. Anna Dominique Coseteng finishes his senatorial term in this session.

Missing signature

All Comelec commissioners except Luzviminda Tancangco affixed their signatures to the NBC Resolution 01-005. She merely wrote "no part" above her name.

In a two-page statement, the feisty commissioner said she took "no part" in the resolution because the procedures for canvassing were flawed.

Tancangco said unresolved issues regarding canvassed results in several provinces had left a "big question mark on the completeness, let alone honesty of the vote count."

Tancangco said the NBC did not show any determined effort to require the chairs of the boards of canvassers, particularly in vote rich areas, to submit missing data on the number of voters per province or city and the number of voters, who actually voted.

"The truth is I do not really care, who wins or loses," she said. "What I am wary about is the persistence of procedures that tend to prevent timely detection of mistakes and fraud thus encouraging rather than eliminating cheating in elections."

She continued: "I agonize over this decision to vote no part. In the end, I realize that this is the only way I can live with my conscience."

Tancangco, however, still participated in the proclamation ceremonies, even reading out the proclamation certificate of Flavier.

But she suddenly disappeared during a photo session for all the winning senators, the Comelec commissioners, President Macapagal-Arroyo after the ceremonies.

Sought for comment, Benipayo said the NBC Resolution 01-005 was valid even if it did not have Tancangco's signature.

"I don't think that it (Tancangco's statement) is a valid argument because we conducted the canvass according to proper procedures and we even bent backwards to open some statements of votes," Benipayo said.

Commissioner Rex Borra, who had engaged Tancangco in a word war in the media over certain policy issues, was more unforgiving.

"I can't fathom the weirdness of her mind," Borra said.

Outgoing Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, whom Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. accused of engineering a "*dagdag-bawas* (vote padding and shaving)" scheme against him in 1995, now claims that he was cheated in the latest senatorial polls.

Enrile, the 14th placer, yesterday said that he was still thinking whether to file an electoral protest.

"I'll just let the proclamation go on. The nation knows what happened. Let history judge all of us. What is one election? Let it be," he said in a news forum yesterday.

Asked if he planned to file a formal protest, he said, "I've not made up my mind yet.

He stressed that he had "not conceded anything." *With a report from Dona Pazzibugan*

Crunch time for neophytes

(From page A1)

"withdrawal syndrome," and former first lady Luisa Ejercito is as yet clueless about her new political role.

Francis Pangilinan is busy forming his legislative staff, while former police chief Panfilo Lacson is set to "prepare" his "legislative agenda."

The neophytes were proclaimed yesterday along with the other winning senators at the Westin Philippine Plaza.

Topnotcher De Castro disclosed plans to resume his weekly news program, "Magandang Gabi Bayan (MGB)," shortly.

"I'm still (in a) withdrawal syndrome. For the past 20 years I've been in media. That's why I'm going back to MGB after the proclamation. I can't leave it," he said in Taglish when asked how he was handling his transition from broadcaster to senator.

"I'll still be a media personality, I'll still be a broadcaster," he added.

But he said he was now forming his staff.

Asked if he would take in advisers, he said: "Yes, of course. I have friends who have given me advice as early as the campaign."

He said his legislative agenda would focus on education "because this will solve poverty," as well as job promotion through more foreign investments.

Ejercito, who had harped on her being a "non-political" person during the campaign, admitted that she was still feeling her way around.

"I don't know when this aspect of (my new) political (role) will sink in," said the psychiatrist-wife of disgraced ex-President Joseph Estrada.

Asked what her supporters expected her to do in the Senate, she said: "I don't know what (people expect me to do)."

Asked how she was preparing for her career for the next six years, she replied: "I'm studying."

Ejercito said she might seek "help from authorities like the DOH (Department of Health) and other agencies."

And would she ask for advice from people like outgoing Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago?

"Yes, like Miriam. She's the champion of the Constitution. Yes, I'll seek advice (from her)." Ejercito said of her husband's staunch ally.

She said her husband had not given her any advice so far.

Asked what her role in the Senate would be, she said: "Well, a fiscalizer, something like that."

Pangilinan said that he would again consult with the civil society groups that supported him in the campaign.

He said he wanted his staff to be "representative of my generation."

But unlike Ejercito and De Castro, lawyer Pangilinan is not too keen on getting a raft of advisers.

"Maybe a couple, not too many. I'm not in the habit of getting advisers. I'm in the habit of consulting, yes. Besides, our budget is too small," he said.

He pointed out that he was already familiar with parliamentary procedures, which, he said, was not much different from legal rules.

He said his legislative agenda would focus on education, poverty alleviation and public accountability.

His superstar wife, Sharon Cuneta, said that while she would support "my senator," she would not be active as a senatorial spouse.

"I don't think so. That's the agreement between us even before the campaign. I'm still going on my own activities. But when I'm needed, I'll help," she said.

She said she was "not the type" to go to socials. "It's either I'm too busy or I'm too quiet," she said, hastily adding: "But I admire what (the senatorial spouses) have done."

Cuneta also said she would not advise Pangilinan on his work as a senator, noting that "politics is not my cup of tea, as of now."

Deadpan as always, Lacson said his legislative agenda would focus on peace and order.

He said he viewed his victory at the polls as a "vindication" in the face of several criminal charges, including murder and kidnapping, poised against him.

When Pangilinan was onstage being proclaimed, it was Cuneta herself who was taking video footage of him. Twice, he was seen winking at her.

Conspicuously missing was Ralph Recto's own "star power," former actress and now Lipa Mayor Vilma Santos.

The ex-congressman said his wife was attending the inauguration of a school building in Lipa—an event that, he pointed out, "is more important than my proclamation."

Having said that, Recto was forthwith mobbed by a group of autograph-seeking women.

And talk of being at the wrong place at the right time.

As the luminaries posed for photographers and cameramen, President Macapagal-Arroyo and Sen. Gregorio Honasan found themselves side by side.

Things proceeded smoothly—until a photographer suggested that those onstage raise one another's hands.

Everyone complied, except for the President who kept her hands to her side.

Reporters could not help but notice that Honasan, who ran under the Estrada-backed Puwersa ng Masa, was blushing while Ms Macapagal was trying to keep her smile.

Immediately after the last shot was taken, Honasan and the President faced each other and briefly shook hands.

Lacson, stone-faced, did not even flash a smile as he received his proclamation certificate. But he was seen giving the President a cordial nod.

Asked how he felt without his mentor, outgoing Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, in the Senate, Honasan said it was a situation "we have to accept."

"We must accept the decision of the people, but we must convince them that the elections were clean and honest," he said.

Ejercito was accompanied by her son Jude, daughter Jackie, son-in-law Beaver Lopez, and their baby.

"I am both happy and sad," she said. "I'm sad that (my husband and son, Jinggoy) are not here, but we can't do anything about it.

The two men are both facing charges of plunder.

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MORNING SESSION: CEO BRIEFING

June 26, 2001, 8:30 - 12:00 nn, Makati Shangri-La Hotel

8:00 am Registration (Snacks and coffee will be served)
8:30 am Welcome Remarks
Ian Black, Managing Director, SAP Philippines
8:35 am Keynote Address: CRM Overview
Satyavrath Krishnaswamy, Business Development Director for CRM, SAP Asia
8:55 am 1:1 Marketing, Your Key to Success
Tim Tyler, Chairman and Managing Consultant, Peppers+Rogers Group Asia
9:55 am Coffee Break
10:10 am Panel: Developing a Customer Centric Business Culture in the Phils.
Moderator: Michael Alan Hamlin
Panelists:
Satyavrath Krishnaswamy, Business Devt. Director for CRM, SAP Asia
Richard Lozada, Director, E-Commerce Solutions Grp., Microsoft Phils.
Michael Higgins, CRM Consultant, IBM Asean Global Services
Nilo Paul Nepomuceno, Technical Consulting Organization, Business, Customer Sales Organization, Hewlett-Packard Philippines
SAP Client
11:40 am Closing Remarks
Marivic Segismundo Gamo, Marketing and Alliance Manager, SAP Philippines

AFTERNOON SESSION: IT PROFESSIONALS BRIEFING

June 26, 2001, 1:00 - 6:00 pm, Makati Shangri-La Hotel

12:30 pm Registration
1:00 pm Welcome Remarks
Ian Black, Managing Director, SAP Philippines
1:15 pm 1:1 Marketing, Your Key to Success (Part One)
Tim Tyler, Chairman and Managing Consultant, Peppers+Rogers Group Asia
2:15 pm Customer Relationship Management
Satyavrath Krishnaswamy, Business Development Director for CRM, SAP Asia
Joey Magalona, Country Manager for Lotus Product Services, IBM Phils.
Bambi Castillo, Sr. Consultant, Hewlett-Packard Consulting South East Asia
3:30 pm Breakout Sessions
Workplace Gregor Bernstein, Regional Training and Development, SAP Asia
Albert Tan, Integration Consultant, Professional Services, Compaq Phils.
Marketplace Pierson Broome, Director of PSO, SAPMarkets Asia Pacific Solutions Pte Ltd.
SCM Augusto Verzosa, Senior Solutions Manager/SCM Consultant, SAP Philippines
Jojo Ayson, Technology Manager, E-Commerce Solutions Group, Microsoft Philippines
4:15 pm 1:1 Marketing, Your Key to Success (Part Two)
Tim Tyler, Chairman and Managing Consultant, Peppers+Rogers Group Asia
5:30 pm Closing Remarks
Marivic Segismundo Gamo, Marketing and Alliance Manager, SAP

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GMA admits . . .

(From page A1)

tricity rates and its attendant problems, the President admitted yesterday.

But "the alternative of not having it passed would have been worse," Ms Macapagal told a press conference

"It is the beginning of a solution but there is so much more that needs to be done," she said.

Tañada warning

Even as analysts hailed the approval of the long-delayed measure as having boosted the President's economic reform drive, Quezon Rep. Wigberto Tañada has warned the bill could still be killed in the Supreme Court.

Noting accounts of how the House last week "railroaded" the approval of the bicameral committee report on the bill, Tañada said the high court could declare the measure unconstitutional "on serious technical grounds."

The bill, which provides the legal framework for the restructuring of the electric power industry and the privatization of the assets and liabilities of the National Power Corp., cleared its last legislative hurdle after it was passed by the Senate on Monday.

Sen. John Osmeña, principal author of the Senate version of the measure, said Ms Macapagal was expected to sign it on Friday.

The President assured that consumers would enjoy a power rate reduction upon the effectivity of the measure.

"How we will be able to sustain it will be a matter of putting the appropriate implementing rules, how the Energy Regulatory Commission will do its work and how the people will also be vigilant," the President said.

Credits

She thanked the senators, congressmen and various sectors who supported the passage of the measure.

"This has been a bipartisan, multi-administration effort. It is the work of three administrations and two Congresses and most of all to God be the glory," she said.

The President said she would make a formal statement on the measure when she signs it.

The legislation is intended to bring in more investors into the power sector and spare the country from the prospect of lengthy daily power cuts such as those that crippled the economy almost a decade ago.

Swift action in the power sector was long overdue for the Philippines which has some of the highest power charges in Asia and lacks funds to install new power plants to serve rising demand.

Opposition

The bill had been opposed for years by some legislators and militant groups.

Its critics say it will create powerful monopolies, cause power rates to go up and force taxpayers to shoulder Napocor's debt.

Osmeña said while the bill requires government to assume P200 billion of Napocor's debt, it also provides for an immediate 30-centavo per kilowatt-hour reduction in power rates for three years.

Nevin Sinsiri, program officer of the Asian Development Bank, said passage of the bill was among the requirements for the release of a long-delayed $200-million ADB loan for power sector reform.

However, he said the ADB would study the bill first to see if it fulfilled all the conditions for the release of the money.

Gloria victory

Benvenuto Icamina, an economist of AYC Consultants Inc., a firm that advises multinationals operating in the Philippines, said passage of the bill was a victory for Ms Macapagal.

"The immediate benefit is the possibility of some confidence returning on the part of investors as far as the Philippines is concerned," he said.

"It basically shows that the Macapagal-Arroyo government has the clout to influence key institutions of the government to sustain reforms," he added.

Details about the privatization of the Napocor still need to be thrashed out and privatization will not begin for at least six months, Osmeña said.

Icamina said that "even before the bill was passed, a lot of investors were lining up and bidding and asking for these assets for sale."

'Excitement'

Privatization of Napocor "will create some sort of excitement in the market," he said.

Foreign involvement is crucial as local companies cannot afford the huge cost of installing new power plants and transmission facilities, Icamina said.

The government could make as much as $10 billion over 10 years in selling off Napocor assets, the bill's proponents say.

Spencer Yap of BPI Securities Corp. added the bill's passage should bring more competitive pricing in power generation.

"The distributors won't be limited to one producer. It's a free market," he said.

Questions

Tañada, a defeated administration senatorial candidate, questioned how a bill of national importance like the power reform bill could be reported out by the bicameral conference committee without the formal convening of the House and the Senate panels and without the formal approval of the bicam report.

The House had ratified the report at 4 a.m. of June 1, hours after the four-day special session called by Ms Macapagal had lapsed.

The bill's opponents protested the manner in which the House and Senate versions of the bill were reconciled, citing the lack of a quorum. They also noted that no minutes were taken of the proceedings.

Critics said the bicameral committee adopted the reconciled version of the bill only after excluding committee members who were opposed to the measure.

Those excluded were Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile and 11 out of the 17 panelists from the House contingent.

"Is this the way we want the 11th Congress to be remembered?" Tañada said in a privilege speech he delivered on Monday. *With a report from AFP*

Farmers end protest but still want DAR chief's head

By C. D. Balana

LAND reform farmer-beneficiaries yesterday ended their 40-day camp-out protest at the Department of Agrarian Reform in Quezon City after 15 of them were successfully installed by the government in at least three haciendas in Negros Occidental.

But the farmers vowed to return soon to press for the ouster of Agrarian Reform Secretary Hernani Braganza whose performance as DAR chief, they said, was "below par."

The farmers belonged to Task Force Mapalad-Negros Occidental (TFM-Negros), a federation of 4,493 peasants and farm workers in 105 haciendas of the province.

In a statement, TFM-Negros clarified that while DAR successfully installed some of its members in their own land over the weekend, most of its members were still dissatisfied with Braganza's performance.

Pressured

"The DAR was able to install some of our members in their landholdings not because of Secretary Braganza's political will, but because of our unity and determination to fight for our rights," said Gregorio Paclibar, TFM-Negros president.

"Had we not pressured him (Braganza) through our camp-out, we doubt if he would be able to do his mandated task," he stressed.

The DAR last week managed to finally install farmer-beneficiaries in the 33-hectare Hacienda Agueda and in the 14-hectare Hacienda Espinos, both in Barangay Lalagsan, and in the 10-hectare Hacienda Fanny in Barangay Talaptap, all in La Castellana, Negros Occidental.

DAR officials were backed by Army soldiers and policemen who put up a detachment near the haciendas to protect the farmers from being harassed.

Paclibar described Braganza as a "slow learner" like his predecessors.

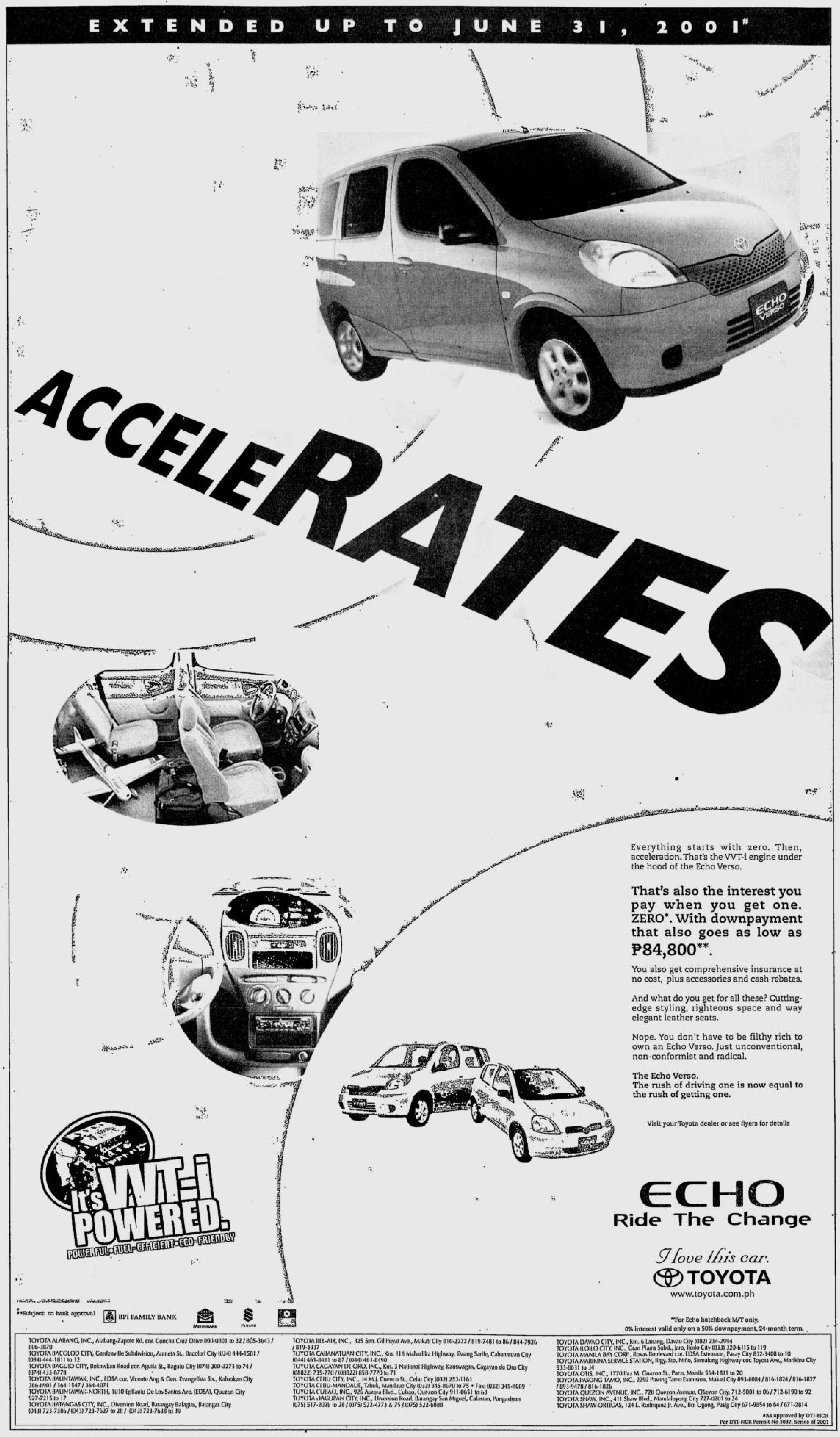
Like a nail

"He (Braganza) is like a nail that needs to be hammered continuously so that he could perform his duty," Paclibar said.

"We shall return and continue our fight for a genuine Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program in Negros," he added.

The task force urged Braganza to act swiftly on their other demands like:

- Declare Negros Occidental as a priority area in of land acquisition and distribution.
- Replace "inutile" DAR officials and employees in Negros Occidental.
- Freeze and review anti-peasant policies like Administrative Order No. 2, or the Joint Economic Enterprise, that is based on the "corporative" scheme of businessmen Eduardo Cojuangco and other cronies of the dictator Ferdinand Marcos and ousted President Estrada.
- Install all farmer-beneficiaries with Certificates of Land Ownership Award (CLOA) and protect them from harassment and other threats from resisting landowners.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OPINION

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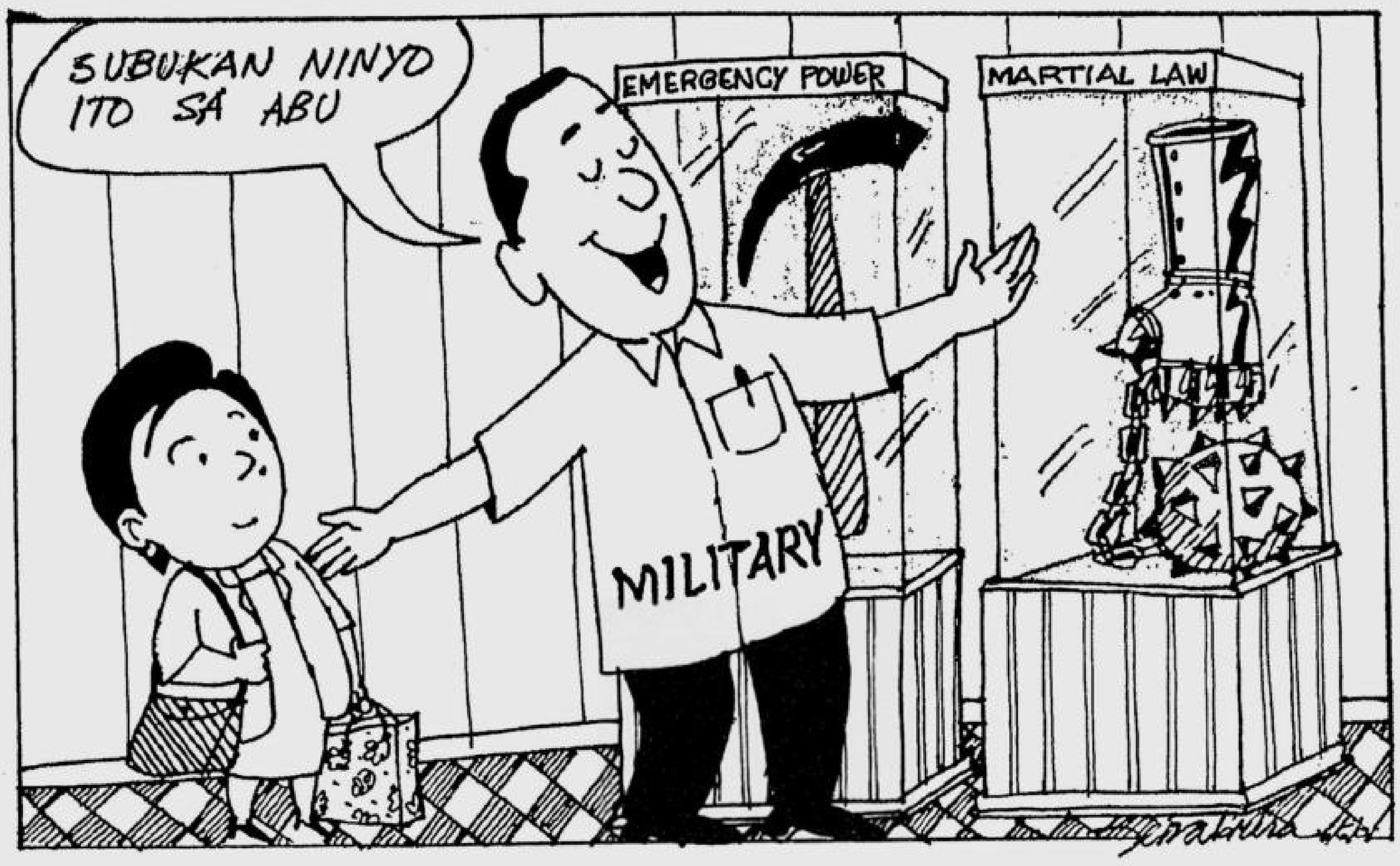

What happened?

EDITORIAL

A WEEK after the Abu Sayyaf kidnapped 20 people from the Dos Palmas Resort in Palawan, government forces had the bandits where they wanted them to be. In what looked like a fatal miscalculation, the kidnappers swooped down Saturday on St. Peter's Church in Lamitan, Basilan, took a priest and several others hostage, and then took over a nearby hospital apparently to seek treatment for some of its wounded leaders. By late afternoon, government forces had the area surrounded, prompting President Macapagal to declare that the bandits were cornered and that the military was ready to wipe them out. "*Isang bala na lang kayo,*" Ms Macapagal warned the kidnappers, who have been masquerading as Muslim fundamentalist rebels.

Just hours after the President spoke, all hopes vanished of terminating the crisis quickly and exterminating the terrorist group completely. Shortly after midnight, the raiders with several hostages in tow escaped under cover of darkness and amid a hail of gunfire. When the firing ended at around 4 o'clock that Sunday morning, the Abu Sayyaf had vanished into the more friendly forest. Government troops found a badly damaged church, an empty hospital and a very disappointed public that was demanding answers to some very embarrassing questions.

What happened? How did the Abu Sayyaf manage to escape when government troops had the area surrounded?

Well, they hadn't. Yesterday AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan admitted that government troops had not sealed off the area. "It takes time to put up a cordon," he said.

Adan earlier told the media that between 60 and 100 Abu Sayyaf bandits had provided cover for their escaping comrades and hostages. He said the kidnappers used their hostages as "human shields," preventing the troops from engaging them in a gun battle. "There was a trade-off here because we didn't want the hostages hurt," he said.

However, a Marine officer was quoted as saying there was apparently a breakdown of communications that misled everyone into thinking that the place had been sealed off. Some residents said the Abu Sayyaf walked out of the compound unmolested.

A retired general expressed disbelief over the military's claim that that the troops could not fire at the fleeing bandits for fear of hitting the hostages. He pointed out that Scout Rangers were among the troops assigned to seal off the area and these soldiers are "trained good shots." The more likely explanation for the incredible escape of the bandits was "a failure of command," he said. "The ground commander obviously did not consider that the main objective of the Abu Sayyaf was to escape."

If so the entire rescue operation has been one failure after another. While military officials have noted that the Abu Sayyaf seems better equipped than the AFP, it is becoming clear that this may only explain the bandits' daring but hardly the government's inability to stop their criminal activities.

For instance, the Abu Sayyaf raiders went to Dos Palmas in a *kumpit* powered by a modern Volvo engine that could slice the water at 40 knots an hour. That might explain why the Philippine Navy couldn't catch up with the group as it made its way to Cagayan de Sulu. But from then on it was a slow boat to their home base in Basilan, according to a fisherman whose boat was commandeered by the bandits that very same day. Julian Rayla said the Abu Sayyaf intercepted their boat, which already had 10 other fishermen on board, and used it to bring their hostages to Basilan. The trip took two days and two nights, Rayla said, and all the time they saw no signs of the military blockade that government was supposed to have put up precisely to prevent the bandits from reaching their sanctuaries in Basilan or Sulu. What happened to all the boats and aircraft the AFP was supposed to have dispatched to find the Abu Sayyaf and their hostages?

Clearly the government forces have been outwitted and outmaneuvered by the Abu Sayyaf. And not only once, but twice in this kidnapping episode. These mistakes have not only been very embarrassing to the government forces but also very costly in terms of human lives. To date, at least 16 soldiers, including a lieutenant colonel and a captain, have been killed in several encounters with the Abu Sayyaf. Two hostages have also been beheaded by the bandits in reprisal for the government's pursuit and rescue operations, and seven civilians have been killed in the crossfire. Instead of dampening their spirit, this series of setbacks should spur the troops to finish the fight. That's the only way the military can redeem itself from the blunders that have brought it so much embarrassment and grief.

If gov't itself violates the law, who will want to obey it?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

FROM THE VERY start of her administration, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo promised that she will respect and protect the civil service. She introduced the term "new politics," meaning she would change the bad practices of the "old politics" such as violating the rights and security of tenure of civil service eligibles.

But her subordinates either have not heard her or don't believe her, because they are doing exactly the opposite of what she promised. Her closest subordinates, including the head of the Presidential Management Staff, are violating with impunity civil service rules and the rights of civil service eligibles.

Last March 16, I wrote about the case of Director General Ramon Ike V. Señeres of the National Computer Center who is being illegally ousted from his position. In the almost three months after that, the situation has gotten worse. It has reached the courts. This is an update.

But first, for those who tuned in late, a backgrounder: Señeres has two third-level civil service eligibilities, namely the Career Service Executive Eligibility (CSEE) and the Career Executive Service Eligibility.

Despite his double barrel qualifications, he was replaced as head of the NCC last March 2 when President Macapagal signed the appointment of a Dr. Delfin Jay M. Sabido as director general of NCC.

The law says no civil service eligible like Señeres can be dismissed without cause and due process. Señeres has not been adjudged guilty of any offense. There is not even any charge against him. Neither has he resigned. There has been no notice that he has been terminated, which would be illegal in any case. Neither has he been transferred nor reassigned. He cannot be "floated" either, because that would be tantamount to being removed without due cause and due process. Neither can he be demoted because that would be in violation of CSC rules and regulations.

Therefore, Señeres is still in the civil service and still the head of the NCC. Therefore, the position to which Sabido was appointed is not vacant. Therefore, his appointment is null and void.

But two of President Macapagal's Cabinet members, in particular PMS head Vicky Garchitorena, and Secretary Estrella Alabastro of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) are bent on violating the law and putting Sabido in the NCC.

Garchitorena sent a letter to Señeres last April 26 ordering him to vacate the position of NCC director general and turn it over to Sabido. She also ordered Señeres to resume his position as Foreign Service Officer (FSO). She threatened Señeres that if he did not obey her orders, administrative and criminal cases would be filed against him.

Perhaps she doesn't realize it, but Garchitorena is going out of bounds of her authority and jurisdiction. The PMS has jurisdiction only for staff functions such as case review and performance monitoring. As a staff office, the PMS does not have direct authority over line departments and bureaus such as the NCC. Only the President and/or the Executive Secretary has such an authority.

Not being a lawyer and being new on the job, Garchitorena probably does not know the limits of her authority. If that is the case, she should rectify her mistakes because she could cause confusion in the bureaucracy and embarrassment to the Macapagal administration as she did in the well-known fracas with Housing Chief Michael Defensor whose territory she unwittingly violated by appointing her friends to his department—but for which she later apologized.

So here is another lesson in law for Ms Garchitorena: under the law, a career public servant like Señeres can only be removed if there is a cause, and only after due process. But there are no cases against Señeres anywhere.

When he received Garchitorena's letter, Señeres immediately replied last May 8 in which he politely explained why he could not vacate his NCC post and report back to the Department of Foreign Affairs. Among the reasons are that he cannot obey her order because it violates existing laws, and that the position he used to hold with the DFA has been extinguished after his appointment as head of the NCC.

Until now, Señeres has not received a reply from Garchitorena. Instead of a reply, she allegedly instructed DOST Secretary Alabastro to administer the oath of office to Sabido and to install him as the new NCC chief. Thereafter, Alabastro issued a memorandum ordering all NCC employees to recognize Sabido as the new NCC head.

To protect his rights, Señeres went to the Court of Appeals which issued last May 24 a temporary restraining order enjoining the respondents to "cease and desist from removing petitioner (Señeres) from the position of director general of the NCC and excluding him from the exercise and functions of his office."

Instead of obeying the order of the Court of Appeals, Alabastro called for a general assembly of NCC employees where she announced that the TRO should not be honored because it is already "moot and academic" since Sabido has already taken his oath as NCC director general. Then she ordered the forcible opening of Señeres' office and his things removed from the room. Not content with that, she ordered the dispersal of Señeres' staff, thus effectively excluding him from the exercise and function of his office. Obviously, Alabastro decided to take physical possession of Señeres' office to support their claim that Sabido has already assumed the position.

This is willful contempt of court. Not being a lawyer herself (she was a retired schoolteacher being appointed to the Macapagal Cabinet), Alabastro probably did not realize she was violating the law, that her willful disobedience of a legal order could send her to jail. And that is what Señeres is going to do—sue her and Garchitorena for contempt of court.

It is ironic that this is happening in the DOST, a bastion of science which is supposed to be above politics. Are Macapagal's subordinates running out of jobs to give to their friends?

If someone of Señeres' stature could become a victim of injustice, how much more the common men? If the source of the injustice is Malacañang itself, who can we turn to? And if the government itself breaks the law, who will want to obey it?

Legalize it

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

MY heart goes out to Francis Magalona. I've always found him to be a nice guy, and I for one would find it a great shame if his arrest, presumably for marijuana use, would ruin his career, or indeed curtail his freedom. I know that other people have been jailed for owning, selling, or using marijuana, and that justice would seem to dictate that they do the same thing to him. Either justice applies to all, or it doesn't apply at all.

But there is another way to look at it. Either justice applies to all or it doesn't apply to all: so free as well the others who have been jailed for owning or using marijuana, or for selling a few sticks of it.

I did argue so in the case of Abe Valdez, one of the true victims of injustice in this country. Valdez was the 22-year-old (at the time) dirt-poor tenant farmer who was arrested by cops after he was found to have a plant of marijuana in the small plot of land he was tilling in Nueva Ecija. He was haled to court where the judge ruled that he had committed a heinous crime and so sent him to Death Row. From there, he wrote me a letter, courtesy of another Death Row inmate who knew how to write and who had become a born-again preacher, telling me of his plight. I wrote about it four or five years ago. Frank Chavez, who learned about it in that wise, took up his case *pro bono*.

The good news there is that Valdez has been released. He wrote me about it late last year, again courtesy of his Death Row inmate—who, quite incidentally never once asked to have his case examined; he truly must have internalized his religious calling—saying he was a free man, and expressing his gratitude in the most copious ways. I hope I've scored some points with St. Peter.

But there are others like Valdez. I remember that some years ago, cops also arrested a *lola* who was selling several sticks of marijuana along with packs of cigarettes. The old woman said she was doing so to earn a few more bucks to send her daughter's children to elementary school. Last I read about it, the cops were saying her crime was a grave one, and a life term was not out of the question.

These are stupid responses to the presumed offense, which only succeed in making you wonder what the real crime is and who the real criminals are. At the very least, the punishment is completely out of proportion to the crime. It's the kind of stuff Victor Hugo wrote about in Les Misérables, about people like Jean Valjean being imprisoned for life for stealing a loaf of bread. That is not justice, that is a crime.

It's so particularly when you look at the nature of this crime. Stealing a loaf of bread, however it does not deserve life imprisonment or death, is a crime in any society, or at least a transgression against good behavior. Smoking pot is a crime only because we make it so. Which brings me to my point: I cannot for the life of me imagine why we make it so.

Marijuana is not cocaine, heroin, or opium, which are the chemically manufactured drugs that fry the brain—that is literal, as you'd know if you've seen the pictures of the brains of people who have overdosed on them—and induce anti-social behavior. I do buy the idea that they induce people to crime. And I do think the authorities should run after their pushers and users with the implacability of Javert hunting down Jean Valjean. But including marijuana among the list of dangerous drugs is crazy (in the drug-crazed sense of the word) and merely distracts the law enforcers, such as they can be called that, from throwing their undivided attention to the real menace. Worse, it merely adds another layer to police corruption. The normal victims of marijuana busts are not the Magalona types, they are ordinary people who run into checkpoints and end up with sticks in their wallets or in the compartments of their battered-down cars.

Marijuana in fact belongs to the same category as cigarettes or alcohol. I do not smoke it myself only because I prefer wine and beer, which make for better conversations, and because I have no intention of bringing back my cigarette habit—the motion of taking a drag is a powerful one—after an epic effort in the early 1980s to kick it. I used to smoke three packs a day. Nobody seriously thinks of banning cigarettes or alcohol on the grounds that they are harmful to health or that they produce anti-social behavior.

Though there was a time when the United States banned alcohol, which was during the so-called Prohibition in the 1920s. All that did was encourage people to produce "moonshine" in makeshift distilleries and breweries and allow organized crime, which first went into it, to grow and become the menace that it did. That is exactly what we have now, a Prohibition, with not dissimilar results in terms of producing crime rather than deterring it.

Arguably, cigarettes and alcohol are far more harmful than marijuana. Cigarettes are infinitely more addictive: make no mistake about it, as doctors and patients with lung cancer from smoking warn, smoking is not a habit, it is an addiction. You cannot smoke two packs of marijuana a day, which is the average consumption of heavy smokers. And alcohol produces far more resolutely anti-social behavior. We do not need to go far to see that: the agony pages, also called the Metro section, is full of stories of people who knife each other to death while drinking gin and cops who shoot up *karaoke* bars while under the influence of St. Michael. I have yet to know of people who did that while laughing their heads off from the effects of the weed.

We want to ban something, let's ban guns, not marijuana. Banning guns, quite incidentally looks more and more arduous in the face of opposition by gun-crazed—which is infinitely worse than drug-crazed—congressmen. By all means let us regulate marijuana, the way we regulate alcohol and cigarettes. While at this, too, we can do with stricter rules about drunk driving. In the United States, they make you do time for it in the worst cases. You want to see the effects legalizing marijuana, all you have to do is look at Amsterdam. That city is one of the safest in the world, for reasons that have nothing to do one way or the other with the weed. With marijuana as available there as cigarettes and alcohol, it is no longer fashionable to smoke it, it is fashionable **not** to.

I do hope Francis Magalona gets back on his feet and continues to tell the youth to say no to drugs. So he smokes pot: I don't see the contradiction.

Two issues

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

TWO issues have developed from the Abu Sayyaf hostage-taking in the Dos Palmas resort in Palawan. The first is about the news blackout on the operational aspects of the military action against the outlaws. The second concerns the plan to declare a state of emergency in Basilan, where the terrorists have taken sanctuary.

On the first, most media have cooperated with the request of the administration to refrain from being used by the outlaws to broadcast self-serving information. However, one station, based in Zamboanga, has breached the understanding by allowing itself to be manipulated by the Abu Sayyaf to broadcast untruthful and misleading information.

Evidence of the breach is the report by the INQUIRER's correspondents datelined Puerto Princesa (June 5) about the escape of the terrorists from Palawan. The report said that the terrorists seized a fishing boat in Cagayan de Tawi-Tawi, took 10 fishermen hostage, and used the boat to travel to Basilan with some of the Palawan hostages on board. The report cited Julian Rayla, captain of the MB June II, as saying that during the voyage, Abu Sayyaf leader Abu Sabaya called a radio station in Zamboanga City to announce that hostages had been taken to Basilan and Sulu, when in fact they were still in Cagayan de Tawi-Tawi. Rayla said that Abu Sabaya wanted to mislead the military.

Evidently, the station was used for disinformation that gave aid and comfort to the outlaws. The Abu Sayyaf helped themselves to the facilities of radio networks in the Sipadan hostage-taking crisis last year to raise the ante in the negotiations over ransom money. In allowing themselves to be manipulated as tools for illegal activities, some radio and TV stations are driven by the belief that untrammeled access to their facilities is covered by rubric of press freedom. Under this concept, press freedom is absolute and the main consideration is to get a story first regardless of whether or not the information is truthful, accurate and if it facilitates illegal activities.

News gathering is extremely competitive in the broadcast media, which is a prolific source of instant information with a high ratio of inaccuracies. But getting the story first is less important than accuracy and the national interest aspect of information dissemination. There's no such thing as absolute freedom of the press. Unbridled freedom is a recipe for abuse and anarchy, and undermines the basis of stable governance and a free society. This is the reason it becomes necessary at times to withhold information that is harmful to the lives of hostages or that hampers military and police operations directed at outlaws. Media people are citizens first and it is in the interest of their own freedom that their network is not to be used to facilitate illegal activities.

The blackout clamped down on the manipulation of the radio networks by the Abu Sayyaf throws in bold relief the issue of whether the scoop is more important than national interest. The blackout is temporary and was not imposed arbitrarily. The government sought the cooperation of the press. Citizenship takes precedence over flow of polluted information. The area of what information is in the national interest is blurred. But the press has absolutely no right to dump rubbish into the information stream. Manipulation of the news by outlaws is not part of the deal of press freedom.

The question of a declaration of a state of emergency in Basilan has run up against valid objections. Such a declaration is an overreaction to a localized problem which has, of course, national implications. The larger implication is the capacity of government to protect the lives of citizens from predatory attacks by lawless bands. The military thinks limited martial law will facilitate the campaign to cripple, if not crush, the Abu Sayyaf. Emergency powers, it is argued, would allow them to interrogate people in Basilan unhindered by due process requirements and to impose curfew. The curfew argument does not wash. In the forests of Basilan, where the Abu Sayyaf are hiding, there's a permanent curfew every night.

Whether or not limited martial law is imposed is a question of the political costs that have to be paid for emergency measures. It is also a question of whether emergency measures could annihilate or cripple the Abu Sayyaf. Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile backs martial law saying that, "If they really want to settle the issue once and for all and to control the situation without any ifs and buts, they should be ready to (exercise) political will and place that area under martial law."

The argument comes from the architect of marital law declaration all over the country in 1972. He speaks from a conditioned-reflex. The emergency was imposed ostensibly for the purpose of combating widespread political and social unrest at the time. The real reason, however, was to perpetuate the Marcos regime. Applying the same formula on the Abu Sayyaf lawlessness should consider whether it's the right weapon to wipe out the outlaw band and whether it would create more problems than what it seeks to solve. It's not just a matter of exercising political will.

As to political will, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has demonstrated she has plenty of it in crushing the May 1 rebellion, instigated by the likes of Enrile and Miriam Defensor-Santiago, in unleashing the military in an offensive against the Abu Sayyaf and in making Congress pass the Omnibus Power Bill. The President does not need to talk like Joseph Estrada with the language of thugs to demonstrate her toughness and will. She has the powers of the state at her command, and they are formidable. She used them when the state's authority was challenged. Hoodlum language degrades the presidency. She has delivered the message sufficiently that if the state were challenged again by rebellions, it can respond without cloning the bluster of Estrada.

Taiwan's dollar diplomacy wears thin

NEWS ANALYSIS

Alice Hung

TAIPEI—In the three decades since it lost its UN seat to China, Taiwan has spent billions of dollars trying to buy friends and influence around the world in a diplomatic tug-of-war with its communist rivals in Beijing.

But as the island's economy slows and the gains of dollar diplomacy show fresh signs of unraveling with Macedonia announcing plans to switch allegiance, that policy is showing signs of wearing thin.

A growing number of people, including supporters of the government of President Chen Shui-bian, say that any gains will inevitably be limited and short-lived.

But political analysts say that Chen, who returns home from a visit to allies in Latin America, is likely to continue the policy for fear of provoking a chain reaction of countries cutting ties.

"Diplomatic ties based on dollars are unstable and often can't last," said Su Huan-dji, a legislator in Chen's Democratic Progressive Party.

Macedonia, which switched recognition to Taipei from Beijing in 1999 in return for a lucrative investment deal, said last week it was in the process of normalization of relations with China.

That will cut the number of countries which recognize the diplomatically isolated island to 28 and leave the Vatican as Taipei's only ally in Europe.

The loss of relations with Macedonia will be the first for Chen's government, which took office last May in the island's first democratic transfer of power.

But such a flip is not new for Taiwan, whose successive governments have fought a bitter diplomatic battle with their communist rival since losing a civil war and fleeing the mainland in 1949.

Beijing views the island as a breakaway province unworthy of international ties. Taipei, with support from the United States which now recognizes China, maintains it is a sovereign, independent country.

The battle for diplomatic recognition tilted in Beijing's favor after Taipei's Republic of China lost China's UN seat to Beijing's People's Republic of China in 1971.

In 1979, the United States normalized relations with China, triggering a domino effect.

While Beijing won the recognition of most world governments, Taipei managed to keep around 30 allies--mostly small and poor countries in Africa, the Pacific, Latin America or the Caribbean—through generous soft loans and technical assistance

But loyalty always remained a problem, with changes of governments often bringing switches in allegiance.

South Africa, itself an international pariah under apartheid, switched recognition to China after the advent of black-majority rule in 1998, robbing Taiwan of its last prominent ally.

The Central African Republic, Guinea-Bissau and the tiny Pacific kingdom of Tonga followed suit the same year.

Niger in West Africa, one of the world's poorest states, switched sides twice in five years --first to Taipei from Beijing in 1992 and then back to Beijing in 1996.

In 1999, the cash-strapped South Pacific nation of Papua New Guinea established ties with Taipei in a deal reportedly worth several hundred million dollars, only to cut ties 16 days later.

It is unclear just how much money Taiwan, which has one of the largest stockpiles of foreign exchange in the world, has spent on the policy over the years but slowing growth could well affect priorities in the future.

"We used our economy to promote ties in the past, but we don't have that kind of advantage any more," says National Taiwan University political science professor Chang Ling chen.

"It's time to call a truce on the diplomatic front."

Taiwan has cut its 2001 economic growth forecast to 4.02 percent, which would be the slowest in 19 years. Its stockpile of foreign reserves, US$111.65 billion in April, is under close public scrutiny.

"Our diplomacy is the art of impossible," former foreign minister Jason Hu told Reuters. "It is very difficult under the pressure from (China)."

Hu, who established ties with Macedonia, dismissed talk of dollar diplomacy, saying there was a difference between lending a helping hand to the needy and a direct quid pro quo.

"What Macedonia wanted was to create a Taiwan miracle in the Balkans. It's too bad while we are working for this, (that) it is very difficult to make everyone understand that it does take time."

Skopje agreed to transfer diplomatic recognition to Taiwan after Taipei pledged up to $300 million in cash and more than a billion dollars over a longer period. It has so far received $20 million in direct investment and a further $150 million in loans and technical assistance

Taiwan's current allies include the Marshall Islands, Palau, Nauru, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu in the Pacific and Burkina Faso, Chad, Gambia, Liberia, Malawi, San Tome and Principe, Senegal and Swaziland in Africa.

The others are Belize, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Saint Christopher and Nevis, St Vincent and the Grenadines in Latin America and in the Caribbean, and the Vatican and, for the time being, Macedonia in Europe.

But some say dollar diplomacy it is a price Taiwan must pay.

"It's easy to criticize money diplomacy. But I don't know if there are any other options," said Arthur Ding, a research fellow at the Institute of International Relations under the National Chengchi University.

"You must maintain a certain number of diplomatic allies. You can't have no-one recognize your existence," Ding said. "Diplomacy is a zero sum game, you win, I lose."

Reuters

Unexpected finds

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

WHILE the job of a historian is basically solitary, that research is hard and lonely, it has its rewards. I rarely leave a library without finding what I came for, but the joy of research is stumbling upon things I was not looking for in the first place. For example, digging up the US Library of Congress for early American attempts at archeology and anthropology I came across a photograph of the brothers Luna—Antonio and Juan—at picnic in the Bois de Boulogne in Paris. It was a group photograph I had never seen before, taken in the heady days before Luna murdered his wife and mother-in-law who were also in the picture. What made this special was recognizing one person in the group sprawled on the grass—Jose Rizal. We are used to a dignified Rizal standing atop the monument in Luneta, here was a Rizal at play. A Rizal who was human again. This photograph was not in the library catalogue, inquiries revealed no data as to who, what, where and when. Frankly, it was more of a puzzle than an answer yet it definitely was an unexpected and happy find.

In my last column I narrated Jose Ma. Mourin's trip to Pampanga in December 1876. I had requested the bound manuscript "Apuntes de Filipinas" (Notes on the Philippines) from the Newberry Library in Chicago simply because it had something on Pampanga, yet the real find were Mourin's clippings and notes on the 1877 execution of the famous *tulisan* Juan Hernandez a.k.a "Tancad."

History is often concerned with the deeds of great (or good) men thus *tulisanes* like Tancad are often swept under the proverbial rug, overlooked or consciously ignored by historians. Reading Mourin's notes gave me names of some people forgotten by history: Melecio Capiral a.k.a Bulacan, or "El Tuerto,"

Dionisio Mendoza a.k.a "Sio," Liberato Maarano a.k.a "Putic," Mateo Grifal a.k.a "Casanova" and Julian Danzel a.k.a "Matanig." All of them, executed on August 29, 1877, were probably the Philippines' "Most Wanted" criminals at the time. They were active north of Spanish Manila in the provinces of Bulacan, Pampanga, Pangasinan and Nueva Ecija a rather large area for a bandit group. These men become timely today in the light of Abu Sayyaf. Their capture was a major event and this explains why they were a tourist attraction, with Mourin even visiting them in Fort Santiago two weeks before their execution.

For those into "her-story" Mourin gives the names of two women who were part of the gang. Perhaps the wives or lovers of Tancad and Bulacan. One was over 30 years old Gregoria Bernardino, a.k.a. "Esperanza" (that's not our Mexican telenovela. It is ironic that her name literally means "hope.") and an 18-20 year old woman known simply as Paula Baluga. Our sources for Tancad are Mourin's clippings from the Manila newspapers that focused on the men. If *tulisanes* are marginal in history the situation is worse when it comes to women, but young historians today are casting a wider net going into areas previously explored: cult groups, criminals, women, even gays. Best of all many young historians are looking outside of Manila which will hopefully change our perspective. Looking at current textbooks one could say that the history of the Philippines is the local history of Manila which should not be the case.

At 9 a.m. on the morning of Aug. 12, 1877 Tancad met Mourin in Fort Santiago. He was seated on a sofa, depressed over his capture, nursing the wounds that came with his arrest by a certain Captain Villabrille. Tancad was described as having an athletic figure, rather elegant—he had two wives—and was rather agreeable and *simpatico*. He was from San Rafael, Bulacan, about 30 years old with a moustache, a sparse goatee, and a full head of black, lustrous hair parted in the middle a sign that Mourin was probably bald or afflicted with HIV (hair is vanishing syndrome) and that Tancad was particular about his looks. He was an *indio* of mixed blood, was well formed, and his clear black eyes had a sweet energetic and expressive look. Tancad had some form of religious instruction and could remember the Lord's Prayer though he spoke only in Tagalog. It is unfortunate that Mourin did not interview Tancad but then that is asking too much of him. We don't even know if visitors were allowed to speak with Tancad.

The more serious of his crimes were taking part in the cold-blooded murder of at least six individuals in Bulacan: two cabezas de barangay, two from San Miguel, of Francisco Trinidad of Baliuag (who was knifed 17 times), and a pastor in sitio Sapangputol. Tancad led the assault on barrio Pulong-bule and the town of Tayug. In these he survived encounters with the police and military in Talipapa, Quibaca and Sabano where he killed two *guardia civil*. In the forest of Malayantac he killed two *cuadrilleros* and an *alguacil*. While we have a litany of his crimes his reasons—valid or not—are not recorded except perhaps in the court proceedings in the archives somewhere. There is more to Tancad, so much that can fill a novel or even a film, but then that would be counterproductive because it glorifies crime.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph

Newfound Wealth

COMMENTARY

Belinda A. Aquino

HONOLULU—Statistics from the International Monetary Fund and other sources reveal that remittances sent by foreign workers to their respective countries have grown to $70 billion a year worldwide. It's a growth industry fueled by the unrelenting export of human beings to various parts of the globe by countries whose labor supply is just too much to be accommodated by the employment sector. The current globalization phenomenon only serves to fuel this even more as borders and barriers to international travel are slowly being eliminated or eroded.

The Philippines is a big beneficiary of this source of newfound wealth generated by the labor migration export, which we now know as the "Filipino diaspora." The overseas Filipino workers will be immortalized as the unsung hero of our labor history and savior of the flagging economy from one generation to the next. Of the $70-billion annually in foreign remittances, more than 10 percent is accounted for by the OFWs. In 1998, the country received more than $6 billion in remittances from abroad. In 1999, the Department of Labor and Employment estimated that $8 billion entered the country from the fruits of Filipino labor abroad. Figures for 2000 are not complete, but it should even be more than each of these two previous years.

More than half a million Filipinos working on labor contracts are in such regions or countries as the Middle East, Europe, United States, Australia, Latin America, Africa and other parts of Asia. Filipinos are the most internationally dispersed, hence the term "diaspora" is somewhat justified. There's even a story by an American scholar in Philippine Studies that he met a domestic Filipina worker from the Ilocos in, of all places, the Arctic region! I ran into and chatted with a young Filipina working as a domestic in a church in Nazareth when I went to Israel a few years ago. You find them in the most unlikely places. How they get to places after their contracts have expired (and they don't want to go home) can fill a primer on survival, Philippine-style. It's truly amazing.

In a recent article in the Wall Street Journal, Robert Frank estimates that more than $13 billion a year is sent out of the United States alone, making it the biggest source of this largess. "From Indian software engineers in California to Turkish construction hands in Germany to Vietnamese maids in Taiwan," notes Frank, "workers who send part of their first-world salaries to their third-world homes have become an increasingly powerful force in the world economy."

Franks' story centers on the town of Pozorrubio in Pangasinan, which has been transformed by remittance money since its days a hundred years ago as a remote farming town growing sugar cane, rice and coconuts. That's gone for the most part. Now, the town is "harvesting" money from the mailing system with lots of checks from Pozorrubians working overseas. It is reported that this is the town that produces the highest percentage of exporting labor overseas. One out of every 10 residents is an overseas worker.

Now there's a new park in the town plaza with fruit trees, Chinese pagodas and other tasteful amenities, courtesy of domestics and nurses who work in Hong Kong. Funds from those who work in Guam built a public library, and others sent money to construct roads and bus stop signs. Another group called Pozorrubians of Greater Los Angeles recently, according to Frank, flew into town to bring the hospital a batch of antibiotics and stethoscopes.

The new wealth has spread into shops and businesses. Name it and it's there--video rentals, TV sets, hardware stores, banks, karaoke stores, and so on. The manager of the town's rural bank, Fatima Costa, thinks the town's problem is that it has more money than it needs. The bank has $2 million in deposits. "We need more borrowers," she notes.

The remittance industry has sparked debates on how the money is being spent, and concern has been expressed on the social costs of "easy cash" pouring into the recipient countries. "Some argue that remittances can limit a country's growth, since governments learn to rely on easy incomes as a way to avoid deeper reforms," continues Frank. For instance, Albania was swarming with cash in the mid-90s from Italy and Greece, so much so that the town square was overrun with "remittance cafés," where the unemployed converged to spend their rich allowances from relatives who worked under dire conditions to earn that money.

Back in Pozorrubio, education is a priority in terms of the uses of remittance money. An increasing number of the population are receiving the benefits of higher education. Violeta Salazar, who worked for 17 years in Hong Kong as a domestic was able to send all her children to college. One son became an architect and another a veterinary doctor.

But, as in most cases, there is a "dark side" to the Pozorrubio "rags to riches" story. The lure of easy money has somewhat warped the values of the younger generation. In the town's elementary school, a sixth grader was reported to have said, "I want to work in the United States as a domestic helper." It has been reported that children of OFWs end up being domestic workers themselves. The cycle is perpetuated.

And on the other side of town, there are still residents living in bamboo huts and still using gas lamps and other primitive facilities. The remittance income "divide" is getting bigger among the population. "They are the lucky ones," says one poor woman, referring to the new villa built by a former domestic in Hong Kong not far from her lowly hut.

Just down the road, a husband whose wife works as a maid in Hong Kong plays mahjong with relatives practically all day. When asked what he does for a living, his mother-in-law quipped, "He plays mahjong."

"Sometimes, I miss work," this husband himself would say occasionally, "especially when I'm losing money at mahjong." He also spends some time in a nearby resort drinking beer with his buddies.

In other cases, the social costs have been higher. Separations, domestic violence and bitter feuds have been the result of the easy cash coming from abroad. Spoiled by the regular "pension," members of families, usually the males, quit school, treat out their "*barkadas*" to endless rounds of drinks, and just slum around. Meanwhile, their poor sisters, aunts, mothers are working their heads off earning the money that just goes up in smoke and drink back home.

With the new economy of remittance wealth comes a new sociology of human relations. It would be interesting to undertake a systematic study to ascertain the social costs of the new wealth in Philippine society. There are already academic studies but more need to be done to get a broader and more definitive picture of what the new wealth has done to the contemporary Filipino family.

Belinda A. Aquino is professor of Political Science and Asian Studies and director of the Center for Philippine Studies at the University of Hawaii in Manoa.

THEY SAID

Not for plunder

"Political asylum is only for those who are politically oppressed. It is not for those facing plunder charges."

—Justice Sec. Hernando Perez on plans of Ricaforte and Atong Ang to seek asylum in the United States

Very disappointing

"That extraordinary event is very disappointing…it just seems to be test after test for the market."

—Investment analyst Paolo Periquet on the kidnapping of tourists in Palawan

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More liberal aviation policies

LETTERS

'HE FREEDOM to Fly Coalition irges the country's adoption of a nore liberalized policy for civil iviation. Such a policy will boost he national modernization effort as t will spur greater tourism, trade and nvestments, and generate new jobs. \nd it will improve the quality and ower the cost of airline services in our country to the benefit of all 'ilipinos.

We believe these objectives are congruent with the policy thrust of 'resident Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. During its first hundred days the Macapagal administration already lecreed the following policies:

1. Proclamation of Clark International Airport as a major gateway or international and domestic cargo and passenger flights in the country.

2. Abolition of fees being charged for the use of baggage carts at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA).

3. Opening of NAIA Terminal II o other airlines outside of Philippine Airlines (PAL).

4. Appointment of some reformminded members to the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB).

But we must also express concern about recent moves by certain quarters that under the guise of reform seek to frustrate once again the liberalization of civil aviation in the country. In particular, we take issue with the planned revival of the Civil Aviation Consultative Council (CACC) to review the country's progressive air liberalization policy. Greater liberalization was already started with Executive Order 219 which calls for increased air access into the country in consideration of the national interest. We fear that once again, under the subterfuge of developing the country's civil aviation industry, international airline services to and from the country will be set back and passengers will be left holding the bag.

In the United States and other countries today, governments are hearing proposals for the passage of an "air passengers' bill of rights"—so as to safeguard their rights to good and affordable airline services. But here in our country, we are still talking airline first and consumer last.

In other countries today, governments and airlines are already looking beyond even the policies of open skies and airline alliances. But here in our country, we are still imprisoned in the world of closed skies and protected national carriers.

For over two years now the Freedom to Fly Coalition has been advocating the progressive liberalization of our civil aviation. In the five years that EO 219 was implemented, tourist arrivals increased 91 percent, from 1.02 million in 1992 to 2.22 million in 1997. This translated to a tremendous growth in tourism receipts, from US$1.02 billion in 1992 to US$2.83 billion in 1997.

In the domestic scene, competition has served the traveling sector well. Prices for domestic flights have dropped radically and more airlines are serving more routes. Passengers are thus reaping the benefits of the competition between airlines.

That is for tourism alone. Civil aviation affects many more interests—from the country's trade to the welfare of its overseas workers, those we hail as our modern heroes.

Contrary to what PAL has been claiming all this time, competition has been good for the airline. From its own financial statements, PAL's passenger count grew from 5.9 million in 1992 to 7.3 million in 1997, with revenues up from P24 billion in 1992 to P31 billion in 1997.

We believe that it is time for the Philippine government to proclaim once and for all an unequivocal policy of aviation liberalization in our country. It is time to bury and leave behind us the pathetic argument that our aviation policy must remain stunted for the sake of Filipino air carriers that are uncompetitive and backward.

The way to move forward is for government to take the following immediate and specific steps:

1. Promulgate through the CAB the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) for Executive Order 219, which decreed in 1995 the liberalization of Philippine aviation policy and has already done so much good for domestic aviation services.

2. Review the usage of entitlements by air carriers under existing air service agreements (ASAs) for the purpose of raising passenger capacities and flight frequencies.

3. Affirm the rights of Filipino airline passengers to good service and competitive fares in the same way that the rights of Philippine air carriers are recognized.—**NARZALINA LIM, chair, Freedom to Fly Coalition**

Increased SSS pensions needed

RECENTLY, the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) announced through paid ads that it has approved a big pension hike effective January 2002. The announcement must have perked up the spirit of GSIS pensioners, even if the effectivity is quite far off yet.

Close on the heels of that announcement, the Social Security System (SSS) also bared in paid ads that it has a program to improve its services. The SSS announcement was a big disappointment to many of its pensioners because they hoped that the SSS would do the same as the GSIS, if not better.

To many SSS pensioners, what is important is an increase in their niggardly monthly pensions. While improved services are good, a hike in monthly pension is much better to provide them with a nearly comfortable retirement in the sunset of their lives.

To Mr. Vitaliano N. Nañagas II, the incumbent SSS president and chair, therefore, an appeal for an improvement in the lot of SSS retirees, many of whom are receiving pensions way below the poverty line. We urge all active SSS members to support our appeal because eventually, they will become retirees also and therefore, beneficiaries of improved retirement benefits.

A saying goes: "Of what good is the hay if the horse is dead." Therefore, let the SSS pensioners feel good during their few remaining years of life before they cross the Great Divide.

SSS pensioners now await an announcement that will perk up the spirit of SSS retirees, on or before Sept. 1, the anniversary date of the Social Security System.—**FACUNDO S. TALLO, No. 6 North 1st St., Angela Village, Talon, Las Piñas City**

Questions mount for Mahathir with Daim's exit

NEWS ANALYSIS

Patrick Chalmers

KUALA LUMPUR—Malaysia has wrapped up one enigma with the resignation of Finance Minister Daim Zainuddin but left untouched a bigger one concerning its economic and political future under Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad.

Overseas investors—tired by the country's financial controls, corporate governance questions and the hostility of Mahathir's public comments about foreign financiers—are unlikely to rush back after the announcement of Daim's departure on Saturday.

One factor is southeast Asia's fall from grace among investors, due in part to China's money magnetism as well as political turmoil in neighboring Indonesia and the Philippines.

On the domestic front, the lack of a named successor to Daim leaves Malaysians and foreign investors wondering where the remedy for the country's stuttering economy will come from and who has vision needed to carry out financial reforms.

Even if the post is filled, which may not happen if Mahathir takes it on as he has done before, questions will remain over how much autonomy the new minister will enjoy.

There is some speculation that Daim was fed up with Mahathir interfering in policy, like the banking sector consolidation, and criticism leveled at him personally over government bail-outs for Malay tycoons.

According to one political analyst here, who requested anonymity, the finance minister was less wedded to Malaysia's fixed exchange rate than the prime minister.

Malaysia's stock market, which slipped on Friday as rumors of Daim's exit spread, may welcome the end of uncertainty when it reopens Tuesday after a religious holiday for Mahathir's birthday.

It has been gripped by talk of a rift between Mahathir and Daim since April, when the premier said his finance minister was "tired" and would be taking two months' leave.

But Asia's worst-performing market this year, down 16 percent so far, is unlikely to go far.

"The announcement will not have any serious impact on the financial market when it reopens on Tuesday," the Malaysian Investors' Association (MIA) said in a statement.

More critical, said the MIA, was Daim's replacement.

"The policies of the next finance minister will definitely have a huge impact on the future fiscal and monetary directions of the country," it added.

Whether that will be Mahathir's top priority may depend on the real reason for Daim's exit.

The political analyst said it would spell trouble for the ruling United Malays National Organization (UMNO) if the parting was acrimonious, and if Daim's enemies in the party went on a purge of the former finance minister's allies.

The Sun on Sunday newspaper, quoting an unnamed UMNO party veteran, said the finance chief's exit demanded careful scrutiny.

"If Daim, a close friend, resigned because he has no confidence in Mahathir's leadership, then this is very serious."

Even if Daim resigned just to escape the glare of politics, that too demanded explanation, the veteran added.

Uncertainties in the country at large are probably magnified within UMNO, which holds its annual assembly later this month with the leadership and rank-and-file waiting for any sign of the day the 75-year-old Mahathir calls it quits.

Mahathir has so far failed to reunite UMNO's ethnic Malay vote bank, which split after the sacking and jailing of Daim's predecessor Anwar Ibrahim in 1998.

Anwar is serving 15 years in jail for sodomy and corruption offences he says were cooked up to thwart his challenge to Mahathir. Mahathir calls him immoral and unfit to rule.

The government's unpopularity was compounded by the opposition stirring resentment over the bail-outs of tycoons.

UMNO morale has also suffered amid allegations of money politics, an issue Mahathir has launched a campaign against.

Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi is Mahathir's annointed successor but political commentators question whether he will hold on to the top job if he gets that far.

With a sound majority, the government is safe until the next election in 2004, but UMNO will need to avoid internal divisions if it hopes to stop more Malays going over to an Islamic opposition party which has thrown its weight behind Anwar. *Reuters*

Agriculture still foundation of RP economy

ADMIRE the government's ausrity measures. Strategic sectors ike agriculture, however, should not e sacrificed.

The National Economic and Development Authority and the Board of Investments made a serious misake when they removed from the ist of priority investment areas the activities under agriculture modernzation. (PDI, 5/7/01) Agriculture emains the foundation of Philippine conomy. Most of the labor force nd Filipino population are in this ector. Activities and programs, herefore, that will push agricultural levelopment must be the priority of government.

I believe a major reason for cuting down investment priorities in griculture was the enactment of RA 435, otherwise known as the Agriulture and Fisheries Modernization Act (AFMA) of 1997. One of the nost significant laws enacted insoar as agriculture development is concerned because it would empower people at the grassroots level, it devolves implementation of major agriculture projects, like irrigation development, from the national government to the local government units.

However, to date, the majority of local governments are financially, technically and institutionally not prepared to take the tasks devolved to them. For example, most of them cannot construct communal irrigation systems and organize irrigators' associations, who will operate and maintain the systems. Many local governments have agricultural technicians and extension workers who collect tickets from market vendors or direct traffic instead of going out to the field to know the needs of the farmers.

Moreover, the Local Government Code of 1991, specifically Section 287, prohibits local governments from spending more than 20 percent (which in reality is miserably inadequate) of their internal revenue allotment for infrastructure projects. I can't fathom why the law cannot be amended to provide a bigger percentage of allocation to these projects. It is not covered in Sen. Aquilino Pimentel's Senate Bill 2064 that seeks to amend certain provisions of the code.

The decision of the two agencies was contrary to what other experts advise. History shows that the Philippine economy boomed in the late 1960s when it made the development of the agriculture sector a priority. If the Macapagal administration is really determined to alleviate the plight of the poor, it must reconsider its decisions in favor of the agriculture sector.—**FREDDIE SALVADOR MAGNO, science research assistant, Community-Based Irrigation Management in the Philippines, Research, Extension and Training, CLSU, Muñoz Science City, Nueva Ecija**

Vigilantes and rewards could cause more trouble

T amazes me no end that Armed orces spokesperson Brig. Gen. dilberto Adan would welcome the ssistance of private armed groups r vigilantes in the fight against the errorist Abu Sayyaf. Last night, on elevision, he was quoted to have said s well that these vigilantes have rms. Coming in the wake of the nnouncement that fat bounty money waits everybody who "neutralizes" r effects the neutralization of any nember of the Abu Sayyaf, be it a eader or just a plain member. The olicy announcement of General Adan carries ramifications we must e careful about.

No doubt, vigilantism is one intrument in the fight against criminality. But it is anathema to our emocratic order of government vhich is founded on law and justice and human rights. It is simply ot legal for authorities to call on igilantes to assist in the fight gainst criminality.

A vigilante, by definition, is not a aw-abiding citizen and he should not e entrusted with the task of pursuing and arresting felons with reward noney to boot.—**NASSER A. MAROHOMSALIC, commissioner, Komisyon ng Karapatang 'antao, Commonwealth Avenue, JP Complex, Diliman, QC**

United cause: Abolish ROTC

THE RECENT press statement of several school administrators regarding their call for the abolition of ROTC should pave the way for a multi-sectoral coalition that may take up this matter seriously.

It is well known how students object to this course not only because of its exhausting routines but also because of its irrelevance to their other educational pursuits. What is the sense in stewing under the hot sun for about 4 hours every weekend for four semesters?

Aside from that, cases of hazing, harassment, extortion and other undemocratic, even tyrannical, practices every ROTC day are worth remembering in considering its abolition.

The case of murdered cadet Mark Chua from the University of Sto. Tomas is but the tip of the iceberg. Murder through torture is really the worst affliction a cadet could get but other smaller incidents happen every weekend, in campuses or DMST offices across the nation.

The statement of administrators from Adamson University, Manuel L. Quezon University, Arellano University, Far Eastern University, National University, Centro Escolar University, University of the East and UST could be a good chance for the student leaders to finally have an ally in lobbying legislators for the abolition of ROTC. This course, obviously designed after the US model, never really serves its purpose well. A lot of ROTC graduates still do not know how to handle guns but the Armed Forces of the Philippines insists on calling them military reserves.

There is no reason for ROTC to continue. Its being an instrument for human right violations only adds insult to injury. Differences between administrators and student leaders in other areas should not stop them from uniting to seek the abolition of ROTC.—**BRYAN NADUA, secretary-general, Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Manggagawang Pilipino (KAMPI), DENNIS VELASCO, education officer, Sanlakas Youth, 252 Unit-1 Lava Town Homes, Commonwealth Ave., cor. Calderon St., Diliman, Quezon City**

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Long, hard look at Church's mission

NOW that the dust of the electoral battle appears to have settled, I hope that the entire Catholic Church (leaders and members alike), while holding fast to her prophetic mission, will take a hard look at herself and recognize her shortcomings vis-à-vis the poor.

I think that despite her official "justice" statements, there still persists a significant gap between rhetoric and, to use the word of a theologian, "practical engagement." The outrageous opportunism demonstrated by the likes of Juan Ponce Enrile, Miriam Defensor-Santiago, et al. in exploiting the pent-up resentment of the *masa* long smoldering under the yoke of political repression and economic oppression should evoke a deep sense of moral urgency in taking more seriously the temporal dimension of her redemptive mission.

But to merely gripe and whine at the politicians responsible for bringing our country down is, I think, a waste of energy unless accompanied by a renewed prayerful commitment to the practical imperatives of her mission of liberation.

Today, this commitment, in my humble opinion, must necessarily move her to:

- Show, by example above all, that like Jesus', her power has absolutely nothing to do with wealth, prestige or influence, but that power rooted in selfless love and service.
- Identify herself more with the voiceless and the marginalized, relating to them not in a condescending manner but as people capable of becoming subjects of history.
- Be as cunning as the serpent not to allow herself to be used by self-serving politicians (yes, including "Catholics") or groups who appear to be meek and benevolent on the outside.
- Foster a deep spirituality of social transformation, articulated by the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines, which serves as an antidote to the over-pietistic apolitical tendency of many Catholic individuals and groups.

The Catholic Church is 2,000 years old and will remain "until the end of time" for as long as it keeps herself faithful to the teachings of the obscure son of a carpenter.—**LEVY LANARIA, levria@yahoo.com,**

GMA's polite and simple son

LAST May 15, we dined at Gerry's Grill on Jupiter Street and found ourselves seated next to a table where a young man and his date sat, dining quietly. No one paid them any attention since they were so inconspicuous. Only my brother recognized him.

The guy was President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's youngest son Dato. When someone from our group requested him to pose for a picture (that his girl volunteered to take) with our *balikbayan* guests, he gamely obliged. He and his girl were very polite, punctuating their every sentence with "*po*" and looking embarrassed at the attention they were getting. They were dressed simply, as young people do, and tried to blend with the furniture. Even their food—snails and garlic-smothered kangkong—spoke volumes about their simplicity.

Downstairs we looked around for the security detail that usually accompanies members of the first family. We noticed only one body, who was himself trying to be inconspicuous. There were no blaring sirens to announce their arrival, no horde of PSG men descending upon the place like a swarm of soldier bees protecting their queen. It was a far, far cry from the arrogant and *pa*-star behavior of the Marcos children in the 1970s and early 1980s, and of the Estrada brood not too long ago.

In the midst of all the bad post-election news we've been bombarded with lately, it was a breath of fresh air. Perhaps we're not hopeless after all.

Anyway, allow me to treat myself to a generous serving of optimism by holding on to the thought that this is a sign that Ms Macapagal is indeed living up to her Edsa II promise of "leadership by example."—**DETTE PASCUAL, dpascual@juno.com**

Indonesia soldiers, police defy Wahid

JAKARTA—Thousands of police, soldiers and marines staged a defiant show of force in front of the presidential palace yesterday, raising the tension in a standoff between head of state Abdurrahman Wahid and security forces' top brass.

Meanwhile, Indonesia's political crisis intensified with a senior Cabinet minister saying that Wahid might boycott impeachment proceedings slated for August.

About 8,000 police, along with several hundred soldiers and marines, marched and saluted during a 10-minute ceremony in a park about 500 meters from the heavily guarded palace.

Both the president and Indonesia's renegade police chief Suroyo Bimantoro stayed away.

Wahid fired Bimantoro last week, but the police chief has refused to step down and has been backed up by senior police officers and Parliament, which says only it—and not the President—can hire and fire the top police official.

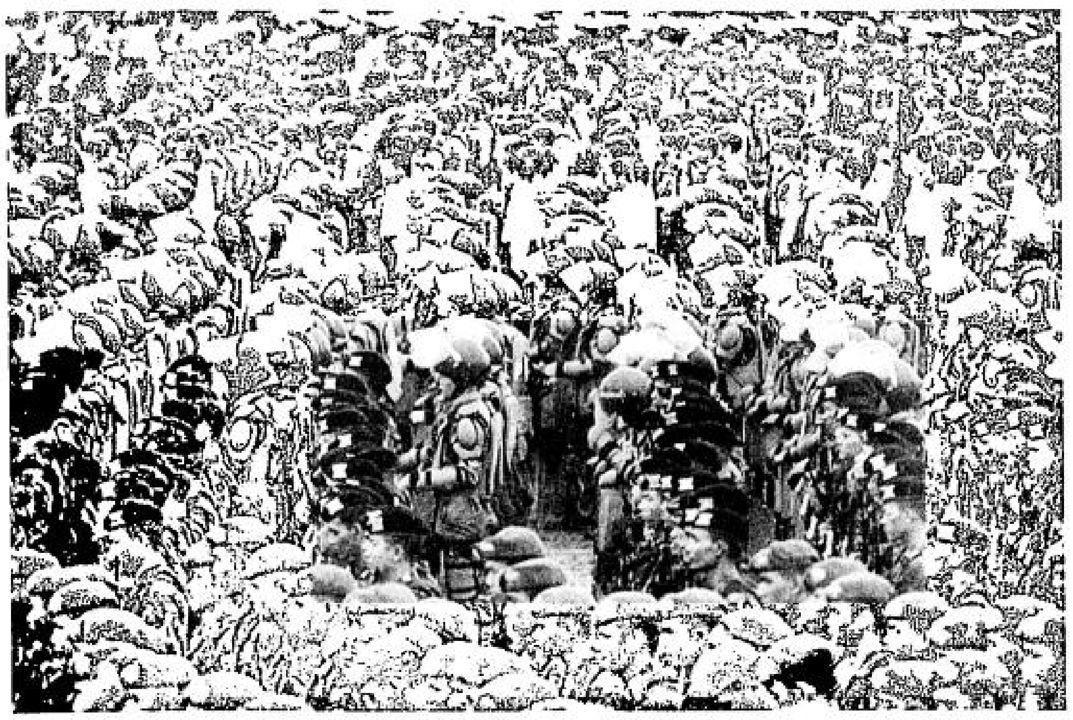
The President, who is facing impeachment on allegations and corruption, which he denies, declined to answer questions about the parade. Wahid fired the police chief and several government ministers last week in his third major Cabinet shuffle.

Wahid is to install several new ministers, including an attorney general, later on Tuesday.

Jakarta police chief Maj. Gen. Sofyan Jacoeb presided over the ceremony and said it was held to congratulate troops for their hard work during a summit of the Group of 15 developing nations last week as well as recent sessions of Parliament, which censured the president and order his impeachment.

Jacoeb said Bimantoro was still their boss, but stressed that the police force was not disobeying the President.

"We're not playing politics," said Jacoeb. "We are professionals. But we are not allergic to politics and Gen. Bimantoro is still our leader." *AP*



SOLDIERS and police officers stand on parade during a show of force in the center of Jakarta June 5. Indonesia's defiant national police chief, who has refused a presidential order to stand aside, skipped the 8,000-strong parade held to thank the soldiers and policemen for their efforts at keeping the peace in the last few weeks in the troubled capital. REUTERS

1 billion people live in slums, says UN

UNITED NATIONS—Almost half the world's people now live in cities, where they are plugged into a rapidly growing global economic web, a new United Nations report reveals.

Yet this urban prosperity machine can be brutal. More than 1 billion people live in slums and squatter communities worldwide. Jobs can be very difficult to come by, especially in the fast-growing cities of Africa and Latin America. Pollution from cars, factories and sewage threatens public health.

The UN State of the World's Cities report, released Monday, comes five years into an initiative aimed at addressing those problems. At a 1996 meeting in Istanbul, more than 170 nations agreed to the common goals of building sustainable settlements and providing adequate shelter for all.

"It sounds straightforward but it has proved to be very elusive," said Anna Kajumulo Tabaijuka, executive director of the United Nations Center for Human Settlements.

At a second meeting in New York this week, dubbed Habitat II, the parties to the agreement will gather to assess their progress and offer solutions. They will be joined on June 6-8 by more than 1,000 non-governmental organizations and hundreds of mayors.

"It is a stock-taking exercise," Tabaijuka said.

Much of the meeting will be devoted to sharing experiences and advice. Delegates from Africa will describe improvements in the water supply for cities such as Nairobi, Kenya, and Lagos, Nigeria, where more than 60 percent of the population has no running water. Canadian representatives will give advice on how to make cities safer from crime and natural disaster. Officials from Nigeria will share the experience of governing unruly Lagos, population 13.4 million, and other rapidly growing cities.

The UN report shows the urgency of meeting the goals in the Istanbul initiative.

"We're also here to focus on the problems that are not solved. Definitely there has been some progress since 1996 but the fact of the matter is that 1.2 billion people remain without adequate shelter," Tabaijuka said.

By 2030, the world's urban population will rival its total population of just a few years ago. "Two hundred years ago, just 2 percent of the whole population of the world lived in cities," said Jay Moore, the report's coordinator.

By 2010, 21 of the world's cities will have populations of 10 million or more, with people flocking from the countryside to cities such as Sao Paulo, Brazil. The emergence of these "supercities," most of them in the developing world, presents enormous challenges. *AP*

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Drought lashing China

BEIJING—China said yesterday it had succeeded in decreasing pollution, but that despite the progress the country's severe environmental problems were getting worse.

Xie Zhenhua, head of the State Environmental Protection Agency (Sepa), also expressed concern at the drought and growing desertification affecting northern China.

"Although the total amount of pollution discharge has fallen, the absolute amount is still higher than what the environment can bear . . . this is to say there is still more damage than recovery," Xie told reporters.

Xie was speaking as his agency launched China's annual environmental report, "The State of the Environment in China 2000."

Desertification, which has led to an "unprecedented" frequency of sand and dust storms in northern China, and drought were partially due to man-made environmental destruction, he said.

However Xie also blamed climatic changes beyond policy control.

"Some here in China say that the drought is related to ongoing global warming, while other people consider the drought to be related to periodic climate change," Xie said.

"But no matter what the conclusion, one thing is clear, we are experiencing global warming," he said.

The Sepa report called the drought "one of the most severe" since 1949, with high temperatures and lack of rainfall leading to locust and grasshopper plagues.

Xie refused to address reports in the Chinese press that continuing drought and high temperatures this year were expected to have a widespread negative effect on China's 2001 grain harvest. *AFP*

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Mideast truce shaken: Israel gives Arafat 'one more chance'

JERUSALEM—Despite a truce by the Palestinian groups Hamas and Fatah and international mediation efforts, Israel warned Monday time was running out for Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat to rein in attacks as the brittle ceasefire was shaken by unrest in the territories.

Some 25 Palestinians and three Israeli soldiers were wounded in the first exchange of fire since Arafat issued ceasefire orders on Saturday as international envoys prepared visits to the region to save the truce.

Israel has complained the latest incidents are not encouraging, while Palestinian officials called on the Jewish state to stop questioning their commitment to the ceasefire.

"We are giving one more chance for peace at present by seeing whether Mr. Arafat will follow through his ceasefire commitment," said Dore Gold, an adviser to Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.

"Right now the evidence is not very promising," he added.

But late Sunday, the military branch of Hamas and an armed Fatah group announced a truce, conditional on Israel's acceptance of a withdrawal from the occupied territories.

"We are going to stop our operations in our lands which are occupied since 1948 as of Monday midnight . . . to give the Israeli people a chance to ask their government to stop their terror against our people . . . and withdraw from our occupied land," said the statement signed by the Ezzeddin al-Qassam Brigades, the armed wing of the Islamist Hamas movement which claimed the Tel Aviv bombing, and by the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, a branch of Arafat's Fatah.

The two movements vowed however that "attacks will continue in the occupied Gaza Strip, West Bank and east Jerusalem."

Following Arafat's call for a ceasefire, Israel has held back from retaliating for Friday's suicide bombing in Tel Aviv that killed 20 young people, most of them Israelis, plus the bomber, in the deadliest attack in years.

But mortar shells also hit Israeli targets in the Gaza Strip and the Kfar Darom Jewish settlement was targeted overnight Sunday, the Army said, although the Palestinians denied the report.

A Palestinian security official said patrols had been sent out to crack down on renegade Palestinian fighters in "areas of friction" since Arafat issued written orders to enforce the ceasefire, the first since the anti-Israeli uprising erupted in September.

Another Palestinian security official claimed Israeli forces entered areas under Palestinian control in the Gaza Strip overnight near Kfar Darom razing greenhouses, but the Israeli Army categorically denied the account.

"We have no evidence that Mr. Arafat is reimprisoning those human time bombs, the operatives of Hamas and Islamic Jihad that have been attacking Israeli population centers over the past two weeks," Gold said.

AFP

ENVIRONMENT DAY MESSAGE AP

A tiger skin seized from poachers is set ablaze by environmentalists on the occasion of World Environment Day June 6 in Bombay, India. The burning of the skin was a symbolic move meant to send a message to wildlife traders and poachers against hunting of animals in the hills around Bombay.

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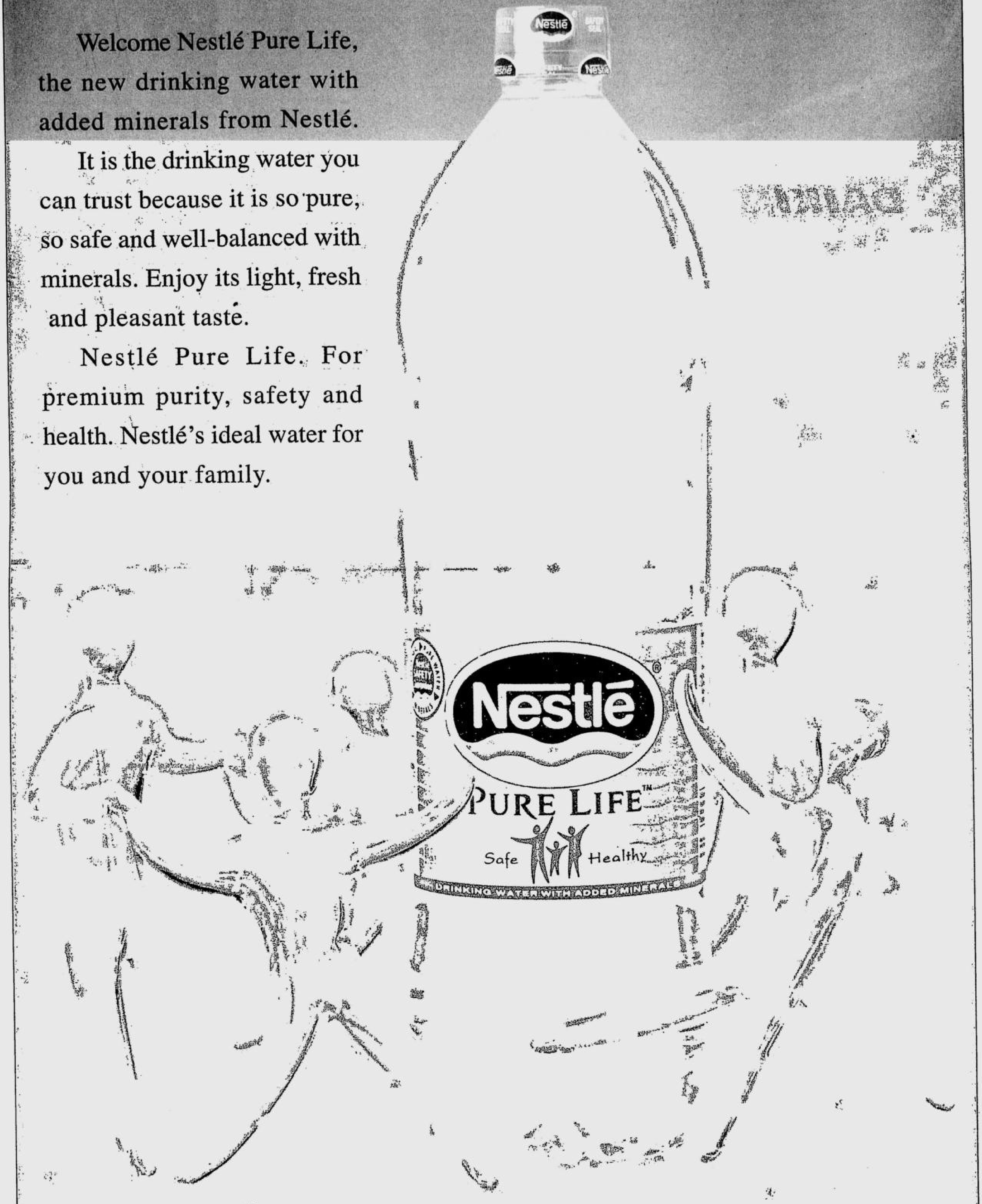
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Nepalese unhappy with new king

KATMANDU—Police moved yesterday to avert more riots against new King Gyanendra, imposing a 12-hour curfew and warning Nepalese, who are infuriated by a lack of explanation of a royal massacre, that anybody going out could be shot.

About two dozen people, their heads shaven in a traditional Hindu show of respect for the dead, were arrested as they marched toward the royal palace carrying flags and demanding answers about the nation's tragedy.

Although there was no rioting immediately reported on Tuesday, police clamped down with a noon-to-midnight curfew, just six hours after an earlier curfew was lifted.

Nepalese who ventured into the streets for their six hours of freedom were full of criticism for Gyanendra, who took the throne Monday after a bloodbath, allegedly carried out by Crown Prince Dipendra, wiped out the royal family on Friday.

Many here say Gyanendra lost credibility by blaming the incident on "accidental" automatic weapon fire.

"There is no king," said artist Pradeep Chrikar, one of many who are declining to accept Gyanendra as the rightful monarch. "There is no one on the throne. This is unbelievable, a kingdom without a king."

During Monday's unrest, two people were killed, apparently by police gunfire and at least 19 were injured.

Tensions flared yesterday when dozens of people lining up to sign a condolence book at the royal palace were turned back.

"We can't even grieve and mourn anymore," said shopkeeper K.P. Rauniar. "We have been restricted. This is terrible."

Katmandu was calm in the early morning, and many businesses stayed shut during an official five-day mourning period. But soldiers with machine guns ringed the royal palace, on watch for any repeats of Monday's rioting that police stopped with clubs, gunshots and the curfew.

When radio warned people of the second curfew, Nepalese began scurrying through the capital's narrow streets to get home safely. It was unclear whether anger would keep building, or whether the curfews could calm those who remain unaccepting of their new monarch, a head of state who wields influence but little power.

Gyanendra went on national television Monday night, calling for unity and calm, and saying he had ordered a three-day investigation into the killing of their believed King Birendra, the queen and others in a palace shooting spree Friday night.

"We need to be united at this hour so that no one can take undue advantage of the situation and harm the independence and democracy of the nation," the king said, showing no emotion.

He promised a public explanation, but will have a tough time convincing citizens.

"A king is like a father," said Madhav Prasad Pujasaini, a shopkeeper heading back to work on yesterday. "We don't know who this king is. Nobody believes him."

Gyanendra suggested that a statement he issued Sunday, when he was the acting king, about "accidental" automatic weapons fire had been flawed, because of "legal and constitutional hurdles."

Officials here have said privately that Crown Prince Dipendra was the gunman—angered when his mother refused his choice of a bride—and that after he sprayed the royal family with gunfire he shot himself.

But Dipendra did not immediately die. He became a monarch on life support who died early Monday, clearing the way for Gyanendra to become king, and then address the nation shortly after Dipendra was cremated with Hindu rites. *AP*

JAPAN'S Foreign Minister Makiko Tanaka raises her hand before answering questions at an Upper House budget committee meeting in Tokyo May 30. AP

Japan foreign minister drawn into turf battle

TOKYO—Move over Toyota. Japan has a new export these days: political soap opera.

A domestic turf battle between the country's outspoken foreign minister and her bureaucratic underlings has spilled out on the world stage, with ripples felt in Europe, the United States and Australia.

At the center of the drama is a series of news reports alleging that Foreign Minister Makiko Tanaka recently criticized US plans for a missile defense shield in private talks with foreign leaders.

Critics have attacked Tanaka for undermining Japan's neutral position on the missile shield and possibly damaging ties with the country's most important ally, the United States.

The brouhaha has thrown doubt on plans for Tanaka to travel to Washington ahead of new Prime Junichiro Koizumi's summit with US President George W. Bush in July.

In the latest reports on Tuesday, Tanaka reportedly made similar comments to German Foreign Minister Joschka Fisher last month during a meeting in China, adding a suggestion that Japan should consider changing its security arrangement with the United States.

"Japan has been protected by the US nuclear umbrella," Kyodo News service quoted her as saying. "That was the easy way. Now Japan has become the world's second-largest economy and it has to shoulder a heavier responsibility."

But beyond the international sheen, the story is pure domestic infighting, Japan-style.

The intensely popular Tanaka took office in April as a key player in Koizumi's reformist Cabinet and immediately irked the powerful bureaucrats at the Foreign Ministry by taking charge with a heavy hand.

She vowed to punish those responsible for a recent embezzlement scandal at the ministry and canceled appointments made before her arrival. She scolded leading bureaucrats in public.

Now the mandarins, long used to running the show in Japanese government, are taking their revenge. Ministry officials criticize her—under the cover of anonymity—in newspaper articles every day *AP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Saudi: No oil shortage

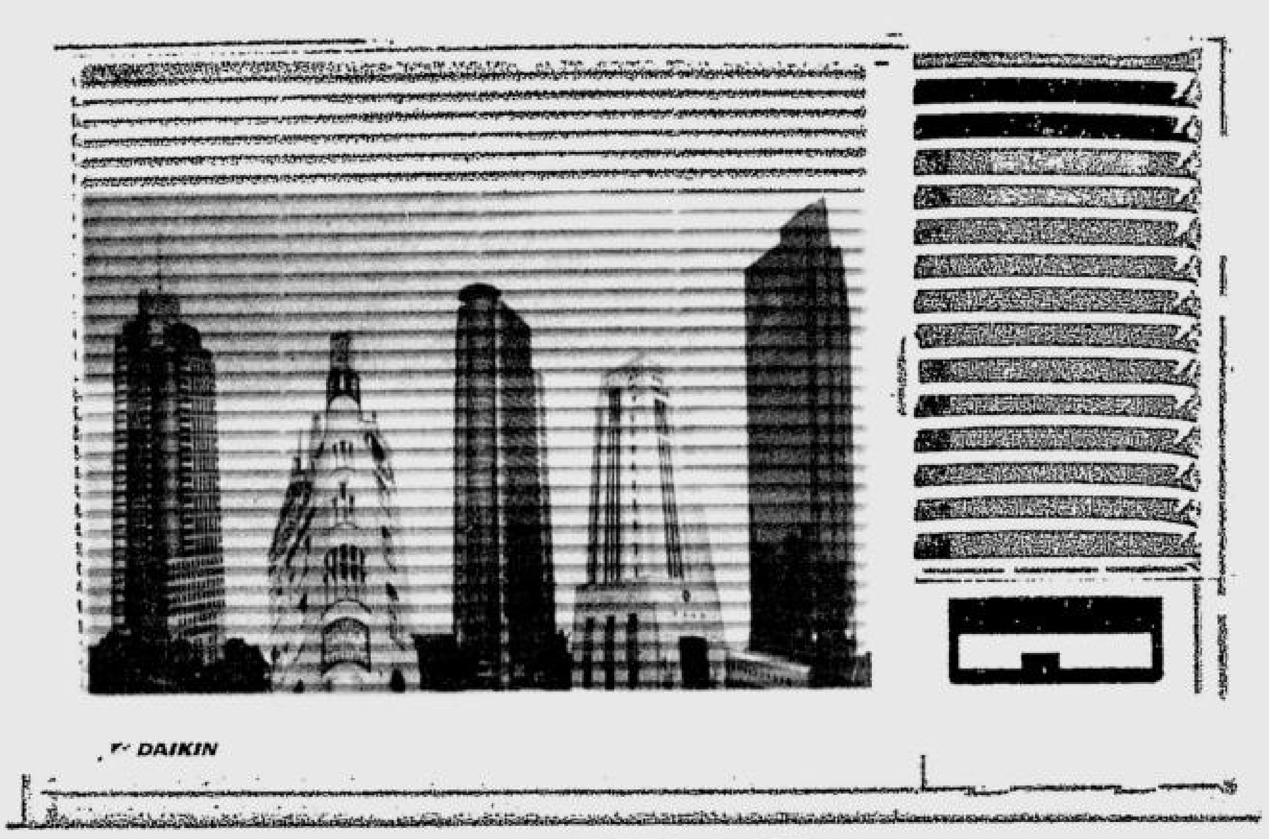
VIENNA—Opec kingpin Saudi Arabia insisted yesterday it will allow no shortage in world oil supply despite Iraq's decision to suspend its crude exports, as the cartel met to reassure markets. Saudi Oil Minister Ali al-Nuaimi downplayed fears that the Iraqi move, which sent prices up slightly immediately after it was imposed Monday, would have any long-term effect. Saudi Arabia is by far Opec's biggest oil producer, and one of the few with any significant spare capacity to plug the Iraqi shortfall if necessary. Other Opec ministers have been more explicit in assuring that the 11-nation cartel, which produces 40 percent of the world's crude, is ready to make good any shortfall from the Iraqi decision. *AFP*

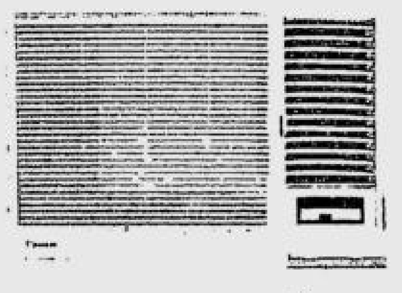
No execution of retard

WASHINGTON- The US Supreme Court Monday overturned the death sentence for a retarded man convicted of murder in Texas, saying the jury had not been allowed to adequately consider his mental handicap in sentencing. The 6-3 decision marked the second time the nation's highest court had halted the execution of John Paul Penry, 44, convicted in the 1979 rape and murder of a 22-year-old Texas woman. The court in 1989 ordered a new trial for Penry, saying the jury in his first trial was never told it could use his mental condition as a mitigating factor in imposing sentence. Monday's decision said the second trial had similar flaws. But the court opinion, which was limited to the matter of jury instructions, stopped short of halting all executions of mentally retarded persons sought by capital punishment foes. It sent the case back to a lower court for resentencing. *AFP*

Asian birds in danger

TOKYO—Human activity including land clearances and illegal logging risk wiping out hundreds of species of Asian birds, a new study warned on UN World Environment Day yesterday. Conservation group Birdlife International said 323 species were threatened out of a total of 2,700 in Asia, with Indonesia home to the world's highest number of endangered birds. ". . . the total for 2001 is a shocking 12 percent of all bird species in the region," it said in a statement accompanying the publication in Tokyo of "Threatened Birds of Asia: The Birdlife International Red Data Book." Forty-one species are defined as "critically endangered," including the Forest Owlet (Heteroglaux blewitti), while 11 of the 41—such as the Javanese Lapwing (Vanellus macropterus)—may already be extinct. Altogether 664 species or 25 percent of all Asian birdlife are rated as a conservation concern, the report said. *AFP*





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Across the NATION

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

POLL-RELATED KILLINGS

Murder raps filed vs mayor, ex-mayor

A FORMER mayor and a newly installed one were charged with murder and other election-related offenses, including the killing of a policeman and a police intelligence officer.

Orlando Manera, a defeated mayoral candidate and former mayor of Sta. Ana town in Cagayan, and his brothers, Dominador and Jose, were charged Monday with the killing of a policeman during a ballot-snatching incident in Sta. Ana on May 15.

In Batangas, police filed charges against Cristita Reyes, newly elected mayor of Malvar town, and several of her supporters in connection with seven poll-related offenses, including the murder of an intelligence officer.

Ballot snatching

Chief Supt. Dominador Resos Jr., Cagayan Valley police director, said the murder charges were filed against the Manera brothers before the Cagayan prosecutor's office.

The charges stemmed from the killing of SPO2 Gerardo Calaycay by armed men who snatched ballot boxes from two polling precincts at the Casambalangan Elementary School in Sta. Ana.

Manera posted bail, while his brothers were detained at the Aparri municipal jail.

The Manera brothers are also facing charges of illegal possession of firearms and ballot snatching.

Police seized from the houses of the Manera brothers a baby Armalite rifle, an M-16 rifle, a shotgun, bullets and one of the four ballot boxes taken from Precincts 42-A and 44-A in Barangay Casambalangan.

Edna Tacazon, Sta. Ana election officer, identified the ballot box taken from Manera's house as one of those taken from the precincts. Three ballot boxes were recovered minutes after Calaycay's killing, with the ballots and election returns still intact.

Supt. Rolando Lorenzo, Batangas provincial police director, tagged Mayor Reyes and several of her supporters as accessories in the murder of SPO1 Jose Ruiz, 42, assigned with the local police intelligence section.

Also charged were Cresencio Saludo of Barangay Banjo East, Tanauan town; Leopoldo dela Peña of Barangay San Juan, Malvar; and several John Does and Peter Does.

The murder case has been filed before the Malvar Municipal Trial Court, Lorenzo said.

Reyes was also charged with frustrated murder and violation of the gun ban law.

The case arose from the ambuscade of a joint team of police officers and Philippine Air Force soldiers composed of Ruiz, PO3 Estanislao Matulac of the 402nd Police Mobile Group, and several others at the height of ballot canvassing

MURDER/ A16

4 killed in Marinduque clash

CAMP NAKAR, Lucena City—Three New People's Army rebels and a soldier were killed, while another trooper was wounded in an encounter Monday in Sitio Central, Barangay Hagimit, Sta. Cruz, Marinduque.

Maj. Gen. Narciso Abaya, Southern Luzon Command chief, identified one of the rebel fatalities as Abe Ricohermoso, who died while undergoing treatment at the Quezon Memorial Hospital (QMH) here.

Reports reaching Abaya's office said the soldiers were conducting a strike operation in the area about 10 a.m. when they chanced upon a group of rebels. A 10-minute gun battle ensued.

Ricohermoso and Pfc Vicente Lorila were airlifted by a Huey helicopter of the Philippine Air Force base here. Lorila is now being treated at the QMH.

Abaya said SSgt. Cleto Gonagua, a member of the Service Company of the 74th Infantry Battalion, died after being hit by a bullet of an unknown caliber during the fighting.

An intelligence officer told the INQUIRER that Marinduque used to be known as the rebels' rest and recreation area, but it has become their permanent lair after soldiers conducted intensive operations in Quezon and in provinces in Bicol.

Sta. Cruz, site of a project of Marcopper Mining Corp., is about 30 minutes by car from Boac, Marinduque's capital town.

In Batangas City, police last week filed murder charges against NPA Melito Glor Command officials for the murder of People Power Coalition gubernatorial candidate and former Tanauan City Mayor Cesar Platon, police said.

Charged with murder were Tirso Alcantara, also known as Ka Bart, Melito Glor Command spokesperson; Francis Noel Desacula, alias Gubat; a certain Ka Edwin; and three others who witnesses had described in police sketches.

Several other John Does were included in the criminal charge, said Supt. Rolando Lorenzo, acting Batangas provincial police director.

A spot report on the Platon murder dated May 7 was the basis of the police for focusing on the theory that the NPA had included Platon in its hit list. *Arnel Avila and Mei Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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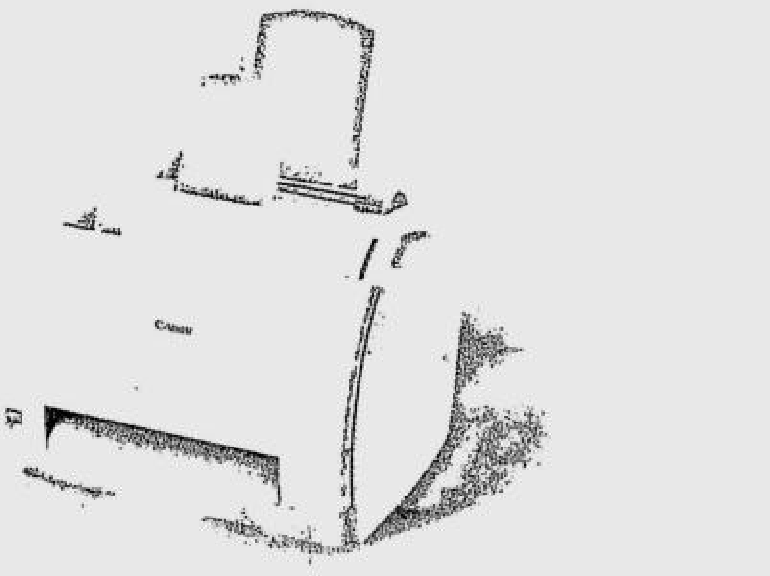

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ROUNDUP

RP Eagle Week

DAVAO CITY—The Philippine Eagle Foundation Inc. (Pefi) is celebrating Philippine Eagle Week on June 4-10 as designated by Presidential Proclamation No. 79. The event aims to raise public awareness and support for the conservation of the national bird and environment. Activities include a motorcade through the city's main road, photo exhibits on Philippine plants and animals, film viewing, and raptor display at the Victoria Plaza Mall here. *Joselle Badilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Gunman shoots cop

BULACAN, Bulacan—A policeman was shot and wounded Saturday by an unidentified man near his house at Sitio Malusak in Barangay Sta. Ana here. P03 Timoteo del Rosario, who was assigned at the service command at the regional police office in Camp Olivas, suffered four bullet wounds in the head. Four spent shells of a .32-cal. revolver were recovered from the scene. *Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

San Roque dev't

CABANATUAN CITY—The government will implement a master plan for the development of the people and place in the San Roque multipurpose project area in Pangasinan, including those in the entire Upper Agno River Basin, as part of the social component of the ongoing multibillion-peso dam project. Renato Diaz, presidential assistant for north Luzon, said his office would compensate those who are staying in areas to be affected by the project. *Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Faulty records

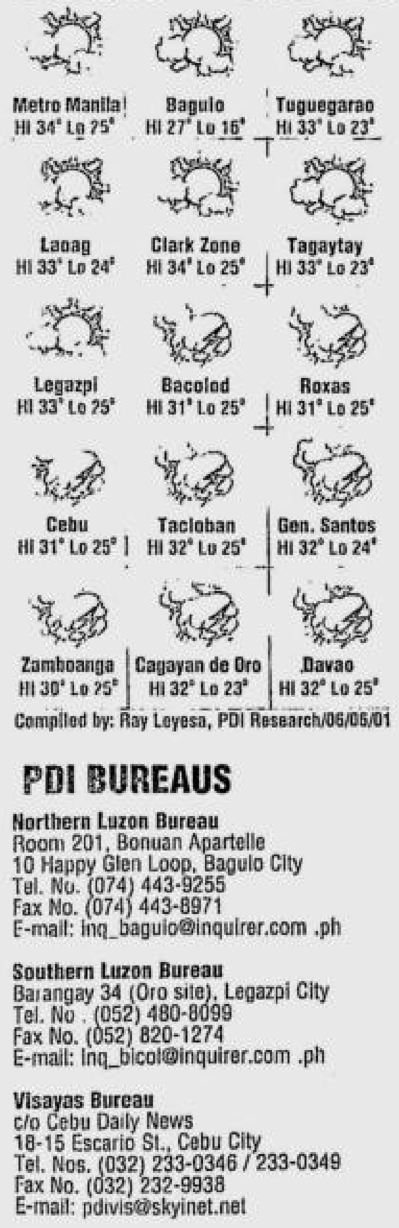
TABACO CITY—The delay in the payment of teachers who served during the May 14 elections here has been traced to faulty records of the Commission on Elections. A Land Bank of the Philippines check amounting P1.69 million for the teachers' allowances was made payable to an election registrar who has been assigned to another town instead of the city election registrar Wenceslao Reyes. The check had to be returned to the central office for change of payee's name. Similar delays in payments for the teachers happened in other Bicol areas, it was learned. *Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Inmates fail to vote

LEGAZPI CITY—Seventy-nine inmates at the Albay provincial jail are set to file charges against the Commission on Elections for barring them from voting on May 14. Daraga Presiding Judge William Volante had earlier ordered the Comelec to include the 19 detainees in the list of registered voters. But Zacarias Zaragosa, Comelec regional director, prevented them from going to the polling places, citing a Comelec resolution. The inmates argued that they have the right to vote since they are not yet convicted. If President Estrada and his son were permitted to vote, why were they barred, they argued. *Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms. SOURCE: PAGASA



Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/06/05/01

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DENNIS SABANGAN

BASILAN RELIEF AID
Sacks of rice are distributed under a Department of Social Welfare and Development relief program for residents of Lamitan town in Basilan, scene of fierce fighting between government soldiers and Abu Sayyaf hostage takers.

Samar special polls to decide congressional race outcome

By Joey Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—The Commission on Elections has ordered the holding of special elections on Monday in 14 barangays in three towns and one city in the provinces of Samar and Eastern Samar.

The Comelec, in an *en banc* resolution, ruled that special elections be held in Barangays Jolacao in Sta. Margarita, Mabini in Calbayog City and Canatu-an, Motiong, all in Samar; and in 11 villages of Can-avid, Eastern Samar.

The resolution, promulgated on June 1, directed the poll body's office in Eastern Visayas to prepare for the June 11 special elections.

Adolfo Ibañez, Comelec regional director, said the provincial election officers of Samar and Eastern Samar were already told to prepare some 4,000 official ballots, 3,000 of which will be used in Can-avid.

In order to ensure peaceful and orderly elections, Ibañez said the Comelec would send police and military troops to these places.

Ibañez said the special elections were critical, particularly for the congressional race in the first district of Samar where only 118 votes separate outgoing Calbayog City Mayor Reynaldo Uy from Paz Tuazon, wife of incumbent Rep. Rodolfo Tuazon.

Barangay Mabini in Calbayog has a total of 116 registered voters while Jolacao in Sta. Margarita has 55 registered voters. Both areas belong to the first district of Samar.

Elections in the barangays did not push through on May 14 because of the refusal of members of the Board of Elections Inspectors to serve due to the critical peace and order situation.

While the municipal board of canvassers in Motiong already proclaimed the victory of reelectionist Mayor Francisco Langi (Lakas-NUCD), the special elections in Canatu-an will determine the ranking of the winners for the municipal council, Ibañez said.

Motiong election officer Rafael Pagod had earlier asked the Comelec to declare a failure of elections in Canatu-an due to a ballot box snatching incident.

In the case of Can-avid, the results of the special elections will help determine the provincial and local winners.

The Comelec has declared a partial failure of elections in Can-avid after the Comelec central office personnel tasked to deliver some 3,000 ballots to the town on Election Day lost his way and ended up in the nearby town of San Julian.

3 fake gold bars seized; 5 nabbed

BACOLOD CITY—Three fake gold bars priced at P1.5 million were recovered by the police from members of a swindling syndicate following a stakeout along San Sebastian Cathedral on Rizal Street here on Monday.

Police bagged suspected syndicate members, Celso Sibay, Judy Emutin, Wilfredo Nacilla, Abrillos Timpad and Felimon Dejarme, in an entrapment set up by a joint team from the city and the provincial police.

SPO1 Homer Vargas of the Central Investigating Unit said the suspects were selling the fake gold bars, each weighing three kilos, at P800,000 apiece. A police poseur-buyer had negotiated for the sale of the fake gold bar for P500,000 each during the entrapment.

Vargas said the suspects arrived in Bacolod from Dumaguete City, but they were said to be residents of Bukidnon, Zamboanga City and Misamis Oriental.

Police authorities said the investigation would not stop with the arrest of the suspects as they still want to find out if the group also operated in other areas of the country.

The fake gold bars, which the suspects said were delivered to them by a friend from Cagayan de Oro City, will be subjected to a laboratory examination. Initial tests already showed that the base metal was either brass or copper.

The suspects are now detained at the Police Station 1 in the city. Charges of estafa and swindling were being prepared against them.

Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

Pearl Farm raiders slip thru dragnet

By Allan A. Nawal
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DIGOS CITY—The May 22 raiders of the Barcelo Pearl Farm Beach Resort in the Island Garden City of Samal have slipped through the dragnet, which the military claimed to have been tightly placed in Malita and Don Marcelino towns.

Supt. Guillermo Lara, provincial police chief, admitted that authorities found it difficult to contain the group because of the terrain.

"It was really hard for us to contain them in a certain area. You see, even those already inside the prisons can escape, how much more for those who are in the open field," Lara said.

The armed men fled toward the hinterland villages of Malita after docking in Kidalapong village around noon on May 23, a few hours after they raided Pearl Farm.

During the initial encounters, the armed men killed two soldiers and wounded another.

Although the military claimed to have killed five of the armed men, not a single body has been presented to journalists.

Lara on Sunday said the armed men encountered soldiers of the 25th and the 75th Infantry Battalions in Kulaman, Jose Abad Santos town, more than 60 kilometers from Malita. No one was reported hurt in that clash.

Lara said the last reported direction the armed men were taking was toward nearby Sarangani province.

"The Army has already moved out there," he said.

Mayor Claude Bautista of Malita said that because the tension already subsided, residents who were earlier advised to leave their villages to give way to the military operations have already gone home.

"The military has given assurance that the situation is normal now," Bautista said.

The raiders, meanwhile, have finally been identified, according to the regional police office.

Senior Supt. Eduardo Matillano, regional police chief, said the raiders were identified as members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front "Lost Command" under Kumander Hashim.

But the MILF said there was no such thing as a lost command of the rebel front.

"Those were not our members," said Eid Kabalu, MILF spokesperson.

He said the raiders could have been hired by political opponents of Davao del Norte Rep. Antonio Floirendo, whose family owns Pearl Farm.

Visiting whale sharks surprise Albay folk

MANITO, Albay–Residents of a coastal village here were overwhelmed when a pod of whale sharks, locally known as *butanding*, visited their place on Saturday.

Some called it a blessing while others said it was a challenge for them to show their awareness in protecting friendly sea creatures that came to their village for the first time.

"We are very busy with our livelihood here and can't afford to go to Donsol, but here they are! They gave us an opportunity to see for ourselves what a whale shark looks like," said Milagros Magdamit, a resident.

Whale sharks are tourist attractions in Donsol, Sorsogon.

The 15-foot long female whale shark and her two offspring have been reportedly trapped for more than a week now inside a fishpen at the municipal waters off Barangay Cawayan.

The villagers were very careful not to hurt any of them.

Because of the rare phenomenon, the village has become a visiting destination for residents and those from nearby towns and Legazpi City.

Some braved to ride on the back of the mother fish or swim along with her and her offspring, while others just watched the animals swim inside the fishpen.

The baby whale sharks, both as big as a man's arm, sometimes went inside their mother's womb and stayed there for a few minutes before going out again and swimming along with her.

The fishermen tried to release the whale sharks by creating an opening at one side of the pen and guiding them out, but the gentle giants chose to remain inside.

Engineer Jose Roco, an environment expert from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources regional office based in Legazpi, said the longer the whale sharks were trapped, "(the) harder (it would be) for them to find their way out because they are tense and are starving."

The whale sharks have been trapped since May 29 and the DENR only learned about it on Monday.

Roco said he would organize 'guides' to set the whale sharks free. *Rey Nasol, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Murder . . .

(From page A15)

in Barangay San Juan on May 14.

The troops, led by a PAF lieutenant, was on a clearing operation along a barangay road in San Juan at 10 p.m., as ballot boxes from a nearby elementary school were due to be transported to the town hall, when Ruiz noticed several suspicious-looking men at a side street.

When Ruiz tried to check the strangers as Matulac and others closely followed, one of the men grabbed the policeman's Armalite rifle.

Successive volleys of gunfire rang out, hitting Ruiz in the head and chest. He died on the spot.

Matulac suffered bullet wounds in the head and neck. He was brought to the Mercado General Hospital in Tanauan.

Responding policemen, led by Supt. Rodolfo Magtibay, provincial deputy police director, recovered at the crime scene spent shells of M-16 rifle, shot gun, .30-cal. rifle and .45-cal. pistol.

The attackers fled in a dump truck, leaving at the site a Pregio van owned by Saludo, with Plate No. UTR 880.

Magtibay and his men seized from the van an unlicensed .380 pistol with several bullets and a sketch of an alleged "ballot-switching scheme."

Loreno said police investigators had confirmed that Reyes borrowed the dump truck from Saludo. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau, and Mei Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

'D a10tion gvn 2 d rqst of d prsnr wuz L8'

By Ronaldo Dizon
PDI Central Luzon Desk

TARLAC CITY—'D a10tion gvn 2 d rqst of d prsnr wuz L8.'

This was part of the answer given by a student at the Tarlac State University about political prisoners in a written quiz given last semester. It correctly read: The attention given to the request of the prisoner was late.

The student passed but school officials were not happy about it. It was not about the delayed attention but the manner it was written.

The worry was not without basis, however. Seven out of 10 examinees in entrance tests failed in their English language ability test.

"I am deeply concerned because most examinees fail in language usage and spelling," said Dr. Emilia Ilac, dean for student affairs of the TSU.

The student affairs office administers the battery of tests, which include space relations, numerical, abstract, mechanical, spelling, language usage and verbal aptitude. The last three determine the student's English language ability.

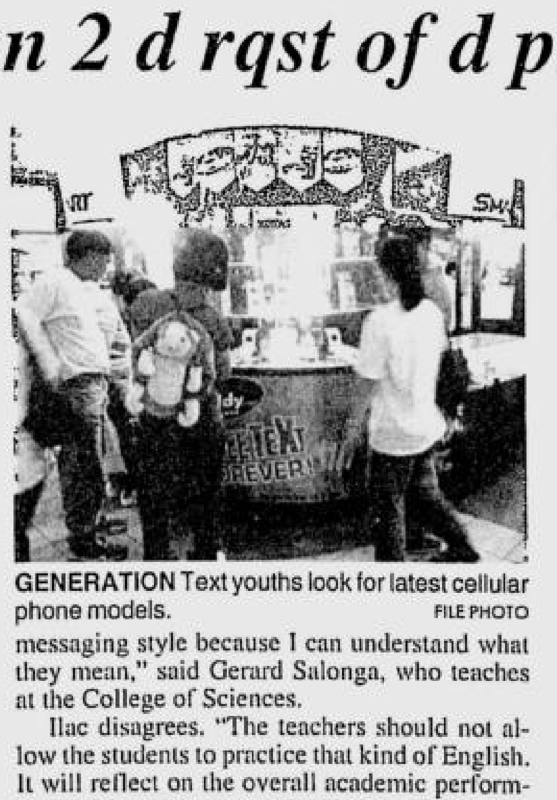
"We require failing students in the English tests to enroll in English 0. English 0 becomes a prerequisite of English 1. We don't want this to happen because it temporarily sets back the educational advancement of the students," Ilac told the Inquirer.

A hit among students

Sending short text messages or texting has become a hit among Tarlaqueño students.

Text users can be seen everywhere—along the corridors, in classrooms, in the library or just about anywhere on campus.

"I don't mind my students writing in text messaging style because I can understand what they mean," said Gerard Salonga, who teaches at the College of Sciences.



GENERATION Text youths look for latest cellular phone models. FILE PHOTO

Ilac disagrees. "The teachers should not allow the students to practice that kind of English. It will reflect on the overall academic performance of the students," she said.

Associate Prof. Brigido Corpuz said texting was time consuming and costly.

"Aside from this, sending and waiting for text messages are distracting from our usual chores. The mobile phone technology is only good as an alternative to usual modes of communication," he said.

A mother enrolling her son is worried about the effect of technology on the youth. "Even the way they talk, it's different. I could hardly understand my son when he's talking to his friends," she said.

The student affairs office is considering banning the use of mobile phones in the classroom.

Cherry Villanueva, an incoming junior, said she welcomed a policy banning the use of mobile phones in the classroom. "It's for our sake. We pay attention more to our phones than to our instructors," said Villanueva, who described herself as a heavy texter.

Another student suggested that teachers should also be covered by the ban.

"Some of our teachers answer text messages even while teaching. They excuse themselves, turn their backs on us and start texting," Marygil Cruz said.

"When we see our teachers do that (texting), it gives us the impression that we can also use our phones in the classroom."

Cruz said texting affected the study habits of students. "Instead of studying in between classes, most of us just sit along the corridor and start thumbing our phones," she said.

In a recent study on the effects of texting on the academic performance of TSU college students, only one of 100 students surveyed said the mobile phones were bought for emergency use.

But the 99 respondents gave reasons ranging from envy to keeping in touch with the latest fad.

The study also showed that the use of mobile phones greatly reduced the student's habits. Thirty-eight respondents said they spent less time watching television, while another 36 said they slept late because of texting.

The study said the disadvantages of using mobile phones far outweighed the advantages.

Villanueva and Cruz both agreed that mobile phones have taken communication to another level at the expense of the natural interaction between students.

"Instead of talking to your friend sitting nearby, you tend to be more comfy with a textmate," they said.

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An Open Letter to President Arroyo

GIVE FARMERS REASON TO CELEBRATE CARP

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VENTURE SCHEME
IMPLEMENTATION
IN NEGROS
TASK FORCE MAPALAD

MONOPOLYO
SA OBTA KAG IPATUMAN ANG MATUOD
NGA REPORMANG AGRARYO
TASK FORCE MAPALAD-NEGROS

STOP JOINT VENTURE SCHEME IMPLEMENTATION IN NEGROS!
DAR REVAMP NOW!

Dear President Arroyo,

You said during your first 100 days that the government's anti-poverty strategy is based on, among others, redistribution of physical assets to the poor. You also said that to address inequities, the government has embarked on "Land for the Landless" programs for both rural and urban poor. You attested to the appointment of efficient and morally upright officials to your cabinet and hasten its service to the poor. Then you promised to give away to farmers your family's 882 hectares of land in Negros province — all of these as signs of goodwill and sincerity towards achieving agrarian reform perhaps.

But do we farmers and farm workers have any reason to believe your promises? Would these give us reason to celebrate the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program's 13th anniversary on June 10? To this day, we still shake our heads and our fists in frustration.

With five months into your administration, we grow weary waiting for your government through the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) to set a clear direction on how it intends to complete CARP in four years, especially in landlord-infested Negros Occidental. For all your good intentions Madam President in appointing DAR Secretary Hernani Braganza, we feel dismayed by his performance to date. You may have been wrong in choosing the chief security officer for the impeachment witnesses to head the DAR and handle asset reform to poor farmers. Farm workers from different Negros haciendas who held a month-long camp at the DAR Central Office to demand from Sec. Braganza their immediate installation and address their various issues have fallen prey to the indecision and disorder of the current DAR leadership.

If this government does take agrarian reform seriously then it should prioritize Negros in fast tracking the transfer of more than 200,000 hectares of land under CARP. Negros is a bedrock of social injustice with its millions of desperately poor rural families trying to live on P150.00 per week and its big, despotic landowners who built their fortune on these peasants' backs. Promises will not end the inherited serfdom of destitute farm workers like Dolores Aldover, 60 years, of Hacienda Chloe in Sagay City who earns an inhuman gross monthly salary of P500.

Although a good sign, giving up ownership of your family's lands is not enough to help Aling Dolores and her kin. If you are truly sincere Mrs. President in uplifting these poor lives, you will take the challenge of breaking land monopoly from the likes of Danding Cojuangco, the Lopezes, the Locsins, the Benedictos, the Starkes, the Cuencas of Negros. You have begun to set the example by offering your own lands. Now you must be the poor Negrense farmers' champion and ensure that your administration can make, even force, these wealthy landlords to give up their lands to the farm workers who deserve to finally benefit from their own toils.

These are the signs we need to see Mrs. President to celebrate CARP. Not hollow promises or token gestures. Make us feel your commitment to agrarian reform by immediately acting on these critical issues that hinder the success of CARP. Be a true champion of landless farmers and farm workers, especially of Negros province by spelling the difference in agrarian reform.

Very Truly Yours,

TASK FORCE MAPALAD-NEGROS

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Join the members of TFM-NEGROS in the FARMERS' & FARM WORKERS' CONGRESS from June 6 to 7 in Bacolod City.

INQUIRER Northern Luzon

JUN BANDAYREL, Editor ■ ROLANDO B. FERNANDEZ, Bureau Chief

HOMETOWN *Snapshots*

BUAN

What walk-in spy?

I DON'T have to prove anything to anyone else." Under any circumstances where his loyalty to the Armed Forces of the Philippines is questioned, this would be Army Maj., Noel Buan's typical reply, his wife Cielo said.

Cielo declined to describe, however, how Noel reacted to a report, which quoted an anonymous source that he voluntarily walked into the camp of the communist New People's Army's Melito Glor Command.

The NPA had held Noel, the intelligence officer of the Philippine Army's Southern Luzon Command at the time of his capture, for nearly two years since July 1999.

After tumultuous negotiations between the government and the rebels, Noel was released April 6 in the remote Barangay Baet in Mansalay, Oriental Mindoro.

Speaking again in general terms, Cielo said: "Definitely he reacted." She said they were in Baguio City attending the wedding of actors **Aga Muhlach** and **Charlene Gonzales** when they learned of the report.

"Anything about him has to be official. I hope they can get something official from the Philippine Army, not something that's cloak in anonymity," she said.

The report came out two months after Noel was released and two weeks after he was debriefed, a standard military practice wherein the experience and information gathered by a prisoner of war are processed.

"Noel and I are always for the truth," she said. "In my case, I'm not affected." She said there are many journalists who wanted to interview Noel to get things straight from him but these would all have to be approved by AFP officials.

What is true, according to Cielo, is that Noel will indeed be back to school abroad. This was long due and which his wife and only child **Jenina Noelle** requested so they could be together for a long time. *Tonette Orejas*

Good karma, sheer luck

IN WHAT he described as good karma and sheer luck, the country's first bone marrow donor is now a new lawyer and Bulacan's youngest vice mayor.

But **Erick Peter Gonzales**, 27, has suffered two major losses in his life before he successfully passed the bar exam and became Bulacan's youngest and most promising politician.

Gonzales, who graduated from the University of the Philippines College of Law in 1999, was only 16 years old when he donated parts of his bone marrow to his only brother, **Lorenzo Marlo**, who had cancer at 20.

Despite undergoing a bone marrow transplant at the National Kidney Institute, Lorenzo Marlo died in 1990. Five years later, his father, former Bocaue Mayor **Lorenzo Gonzales**, succumbed to leukemia.

As he recalled the death of two of his loved ones, Gonzales said he has survived life's obstacles and challenges because of hard work and perseverance. He also did his best in his studies to support his 67-year-old mother **Belen**.

"I have sacrificed a lot just to fulfill my dream to become a lawyer. I have also worked hard to reach my goals. If you consider me lucky, probably it's because of good karma and because I've helped my brother when he was sick," he said.

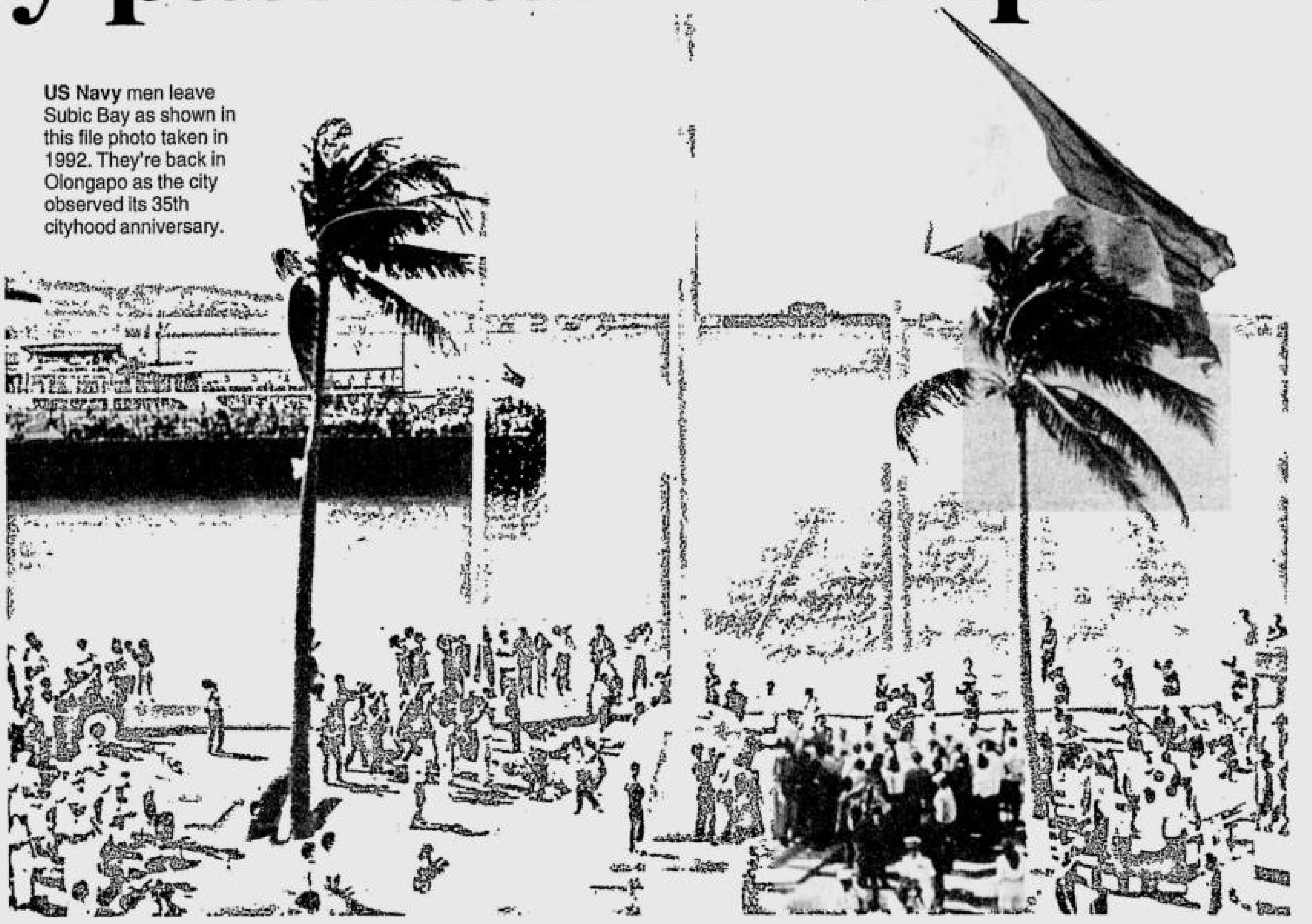
Following in his father's footsteps, Gonzales, then a UP law student, tried his hand in politics and became one of Bulacan's youngest councilors at 24.

As vice mayor, he will be closely working with Mayor **Eduardo Villanueva Jr.**, Bulacan's youngest mayor at 29.

He said he would focus on programs that would address the educational needs of the youth. *Carmela Reyes*

Rowdy past haunts 'Gapo

By Tonette Orejas
Olongapo City



US Navy men leave Subic Bay as shown in this file photo taken in 1992. They're back in Olongapo as the city observed its 35th cityhood anniversary.

CALL it a coincidence, a paradox, or both, but the then rowdy and now subdued Olongapo City saw on June 1 its past and present bumping, if not haunting, each other.

The US Navy returned on the same day Olongapo was observing its 35th year of cityhood—the result of a crusade of a man who renounced his American citizenship to pursue his dream of making the 18,000-hectare coastal town "free from the clutches of the Americans and the US Navy."

That day in the city built by the US Navy, as the 1966 inaugural and souvenir program hailed, at least 1,400 American personnel arrived, not for assignments related to wars like those waged five decades ago in Korea and in Vietnam.

In the city hosting a base last ceded by the Americans to the government in 1992, or a year after the Senate's scrapping of the 1947 Philippine-US Military Bases Agreement, the troops came back, like they did last year, for war games allowed under the Visiting Forces Agreement.

A coincidence?

No one publicly noted the coincidence or the paradox. Activists from the Olongapo and Zambales chapters of the Kilusan para sa Pambansang Demokrasya (KPD) focused their ire on the presence of US troops on Philippine soil.

They resented the effects of the troops' "rest and recreation (R & R)" activities on prostitution and the impact of the exercises on environment and public safety.

The city government opted to remember the battles won by James Leonard Gordon who, according to city information officer Mike Pusing, "fought the illegal body searches, the interference of the US Navy in local government."

From being under the jurisdiction of the then Subic Naval Base, Olongapo on Dec. 7, 1959 became a town. Again, according to Pusing, on the crusade of Gordon.

Gordon's life, his dreams of an independent Olongapo and his master plan that would "wean (the town) away from the influence of the US Navy" are pushed back to the public mind, recalled in an exhibit of photos and news reports put up at the City Hall lobby.

Pusing, whose father served as an adviser to the mayor, said Gordon "exposed the rape of the forests, the outrageous sale of the Olongapo power plant, and battled smugglers of arms and cigarettes and all forms of immorality, graft and corruption."

These, according to him, incurred for Gordon powerful enemies. Who they were, Pusing did not say.

The second assassination attempt on Gordon, carried out on the steps of City Hall on Feb. 26, 1967, did not miss. His death belonged to the list of unsolved but unforgotten crimes in the country.

"He was born to an American father, chose to be a Filipino, raised his children as Filipinos, served his country as a Filipino and died a Filipino hero," the late nationalist Sen. Jose W. Diokno was quoted to have said of the man.

Gordon rests in a grave on a hill facing the South China Sea, the waters from where the US Navy docked four warships on June 1.

The US Navy, even while its servicemen stay for two weeks, will continue to shape the lives of people in Olongapo, according to KPD's Millet Gobrin-Morante

No longer dependent

Here is where the troops spend their money for R & R or shopping, similar to the days when residents catered to the needs of the servicemen, she said.

But what would really make Gordon wince in his grave is to see an Olongapo resident "an alien in his native land," Pusing said, quoting Jose Balein who wrote prize-winning articles on Olongapo for the defunct Manila Chronicle.

Pusing said the city was not entirely dependent now on the Americans. The naval base has been converted into a freeport, led in its pioneering years by Gordon's son Richard, now tourism secretary.

Prostitution had been curbed, Pusing said.

The city government, through its VFA Commission local monitoring council, has met the return of the US soldiers with "qualified support and concern."

In a resolution, it said that "while Olongapo played such an important role in the past, it traditionally has not had a voice in the policies governing the affairs of these foreign forces which resulted in many undesirable and deplorable social and political ills that plagued the city for many decades and which it has resolved and succeeded to make a thing of the past."

The city council, on the other hand, did not want a "reversion to any of the old economic and social ills that were associated with the naval base."

It said Olongapo had risen from its old image as a "Sin City." Instead, it wanted "economic and developmental benefits for the community and the country as a result of the conduct of (the) exercises this time around."

Pusing said Gordon, the city's founder, "might have wanted it that way."

Morante said Olongapo, like Clark Field in Angeles City in Pampanga, which relied on the military bases for a living, finds itself trying to crawl out of the jut of dependence.

The weaning process, she noted, was quite unsuccessful because both cities continued to maintain large R & R sectors that are encouraged now by the regular visits of American troops, while jobs at bases-turned-economic zones are few and pay so little.

These are concerns that the Gordon sons, Richard and Zambales Rep. James Gordon Jr., and daughter-in-law Mayor Katherine Gordon, are dealing with in modern 'Gapo.

Startling revelations thru mixed media

By Elizabeth Lolarga

IT is one of the most private acts of a person. 'Ensembles: Collage and Book Art," an exhibition at The Sanctuary Gallery (Maryknoll compound) in Campo Sioco, Baguio City, salutes the intimacy of reading or for that matter viewing an artwork.

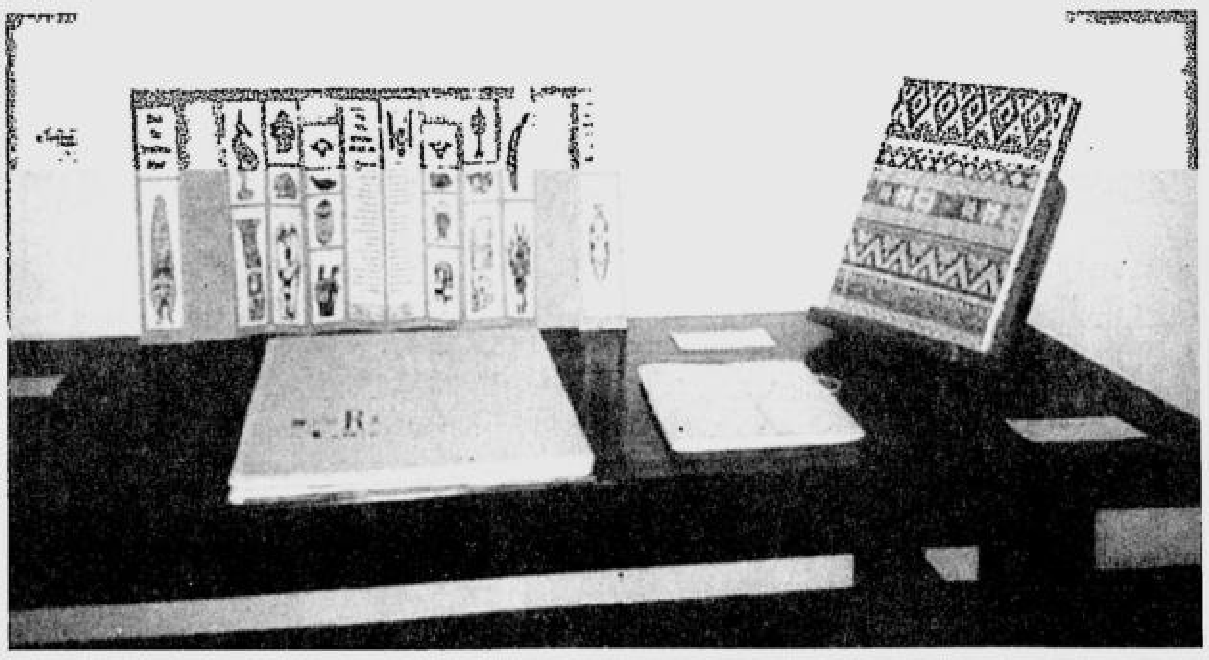
The group show gathers 14 Baguio-based artists in a spacious setting that used to be a kindergarten classroom and later turned into a storeroom. In its current incarnation, the blackboards have been turned around, the walls painted off-white, and track lights affixed below the ceiling.

Roberto Acosta, Ged Alangui, Erlyn Ruth Alcantara, Roland Bayan, Bencab, Clemente Delim, Nida Dumsang, Jojo Elmeda, Jordan Mang-osan, Ysel Martinez, Rishab, John Frank Sabado, Mark Tandoyog and Delfin Tolentino Jr. dexterously turn a variety of materials on their heads: newspaper and magazine cutouts, color photos and black and white photocopies, stamps, stickers, tickets, doodles, tinfoil, corrugated, marbled and handmade paper, computer generated images, beads, bracelets, textiles and what-nots.

One leaves the place amazed and refreshed. The element of play is factored in. Take Acosta's "Bisikleta" whose startling colors, folk images and composition have a Mexican flavor.

Central here is a Cordillera mother carrying a baby on a sling. It can just be another take on the Madonna-and-Child theme until one notices a black mountain bike on the right.

Is this the manner of transport with which she and her child arrived at the bucolic scenery of hills, flowers and one smiling, silvery sun? Or maybe this is the artist's autobiographical insert, he being a health buff and cycling enthusiast.



"CABINET of Curiosities" by Delfin Tolentino Jr., "Short Stories" by Rishab, and E.R. Alcantara's clothbound book using oriental binding and handmade paper folio with bamboo hook.

E.R. ALCANTARA

Delim's "Denizen of the Night" is a quiet landscape made of pieces of dyed handmade paper cut out to form rice terraces, clouds and a soothingly blue night.

Bencab's "Diary 1" and "Diary 2" consist of snippets of memory from his travels in Asia and Europe: a xeroxed page from his passport, a child's doodle, tickets to "Miss Saigon" and what appears to be a rock concert by the Killer Dogs, fortune cookie messages ("You will have and long and healthy life"), tickets to a sex museum in Amsterdam and the Vincent Van Gogh Museum, a handwritten plaintive plea from a certain Linda ("Is there somebody alive out there? Answer on a postcard/Christmas card/scrap of paper/anything . . . love and cuddles").

Dali-esque influence

There is a strikingly Dali-esque influence in Bay-an's dreamlike "Last Supper" with only Christ possessing a distinctively human face while the apostles on either side of him are rendered in an assortment of magazine cutouts shaped like heads and bodily extensions.

A discovery is Martinez, a homemaker and former money market trader, whose admirable craftsmanship is reflected in a trio of portraits of the Filipina in traditional garb and accessories (a *tampipi* or native suitcase, a triangular *salakot* and a *bilao* of fruits) but with modern, sometimes aggressive, facial expressions and stances. There is perplexity, hopefulness and even petulance in the gestures of these women.

She pays loving attention to detail in "Bagong Salta's" red gown with leafy prints in cream, all finely cut out. "Tagpi-tagping Saya" reminds one of the Steve de Leon skirt of colorful patches of cloth modeled in the landmark fashion show "Jamming on an Old Saya."

From afar, Dumsang's "Flowers No. 1" and "Flowers No. 2" look like Chinese brush works. But they are again cutouts of handmade paper dyed brown for the branches, light green for the leaves and pink and light orange for the flowers, all delicately put together.

Mang-osan does a merry mix of solar drawings of a man and a woman, both squatting like *bulols* (native rice gods) at the center of his board, and photo montage around them are pictures of the feasting, dancing, gong-playing and drinking that are the staples of a highland wedding.

Malapropisms

The simpler books are Alcantara's "Lessons in English" and "Say What? Enjoying Fractured English." These never fail to elicit laughter from readers. They are collections of bon mots and malapropisms in English usage.

Samples: "Exaggeration is a billion times worse than an understatement." "Why isn't 11 pronounced as onety one?" "Hotel chef Mr. Zheng and his fellow workers like to meet you and entertain you with their hostility."

The text is sometimes enhanced by a background of Turkish marbling and Japanese suminagashi (also a form of marbling).

But it is scholar Tolentino who takes book art to its artistic and literary heights with his editions-of-one volumes printed on special paper.

"United Colors Catalog No. 1" is an accordion-type collection of postcards from what first appears to be make-believe foreign countries. The artist cut and pasted pictures of various sceneries from glossy magazines.

Each panel always carries a human face—a black, an Asian, a Caucasian, etc. On the last panel is a blurb for the fictitious travel agency stating: "Our aim is to make the unique available to all and thus to dissolve all differences." The entire set could have come from the hands of famed writer-collagist Nick Bantock.

Tolentino's "Dummari, the Lecherous Woman" is based on an Isneg tale about a woman left by her husband. She continues to pine for sex until one day, while catching fish and shrimps, she fishes out a live penis. She puts the organ in a bamboo tube and takes it out at night when her children are asleep to satisfy her lust. Until one day the children espy the tube while cleaning the house. Scandalized, they put pepper on the penis, and it dies, leaving the woman frustrated.

The reteller of the tale decorates the text with photos from Rodrigo Perez III et al.'s "Folk Architecture" and Dean Worcester's article, "The Non-Christian Peoples of the Philippine Islands."

Most moving is the small, rectangular olive-green book, "Fragments of Dreams." It is a logbook of the author's dreams written in quatrains of verses and illustrated with images of a floating quill, goblet, cup and saucer, telephone, skull and other objects after every stanza.

All these testify to mixed media's versatility in "reflecting a miscellany of memories and concealed emotions," according to curator Alcantara's exhibition notes. Because of "Ensemble's" success, she is thinking of doing a quick follow-up exhibit, "Ensembles 2," after the former closes on June 20.

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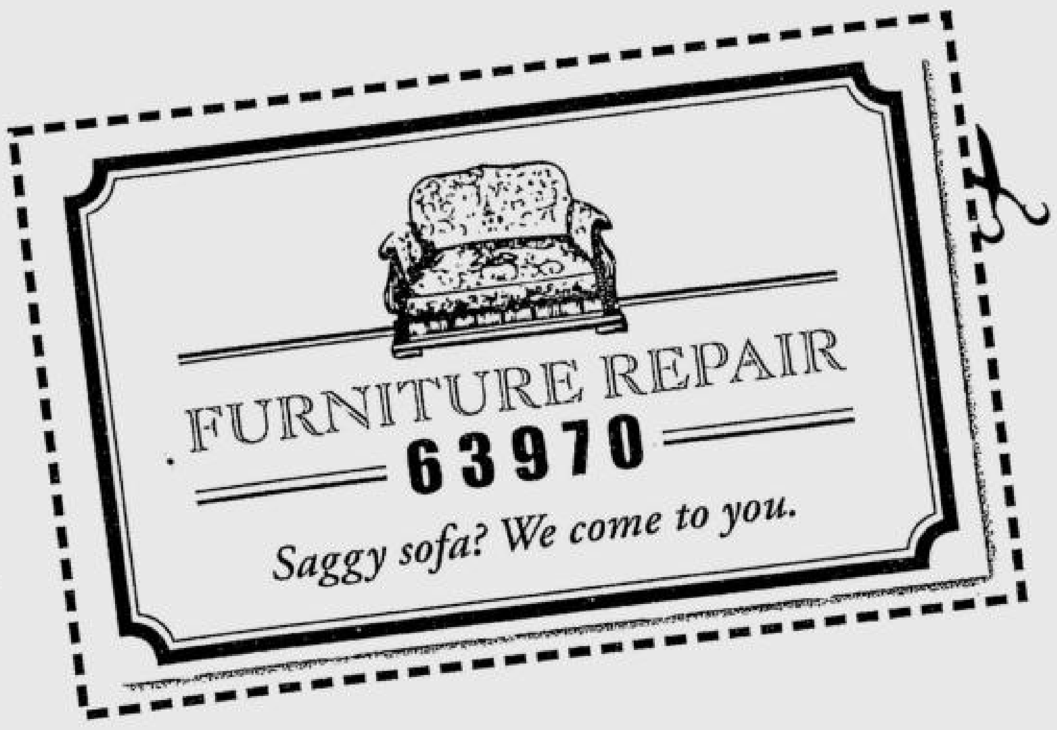
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New fighting erupts; 2 more soldiers killed

(From page A1)

Cainglet, who were airlifted to this city yesterday afternoon.

Yesterday's clash brought the government's casualty toll to 13 soldiers killed and 41 others wounded.

The military is under fire from various sectors for the escape of the bandits who were cornered Saturday at the Dr. Jose Maria Torres Hospital in Lamitan, Basilan.

At a press conference yesterday in Malacañang, President Macapagal-Arroyo appealed for understanding and said the soldiers were not entirely to blame.

She also called for unity against the Abu Sayyaf, and for prayers "to help our valiant soldiers and policemen."

Despite this, Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes said there would be changes in the military leadership in Basilan.

"Definitely, we might expect some movements among the commanders there, not necessarily because they are bad commanders, but because there is a need for change and we should see that coming," Reyes said at the press conference.

Military sources in Camp Aguinaldo later said Col. Jovenal Narcise, commander of the 103rd Brigade, would be replaced by Col. Hermogenes Esperon, commander of the 602nd Brigade based in North Cotabato.

Sought for comment, Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan, spokesperson of the Armed Forces, said he had yet to see a formal order to that effect.

But he said that if there would be a military reshuffle in Basilan, "it is to further improve our efforts against the Abu Sayyaf."

'Price' to pay

Government troops reestablished contact with the Abu Sayyaf about 4 p.m. Monday on the slopes of Mt. Sinangkapan in Tuburan, after the bandits slipped through the military cordon in Lamitan.

. Tuburan was where, on June 1, the troops first established contact with the bandits since they raided the Dos Palmas resort in Palawan on May 27 and took 20 people hostage.

"I can accept the temporary escape of the bandits if this is the price for the safety of the hostages," the President said in Filipino.

"We could have smashed the cornered members of the Abu Sayyaf but it would not be right and I won't permit it if hostages are killed or hurt," she added.

Reading from a prepared statement, Ms Macapagal said: "Those of us who are safe and comfortable in the confines of our homes, offices and schools should bear in mind the idea of our soldiers against the pest that is the Abu Sayyaf.

"Let us use our prayers as weapons against the enemy and to help our valiant soldiers and policemen."

She said "our society should stand united" and "isolate" the Abu Sayyaf, "so that this pest would be eliminated from our lives."

"We should help save the hostages and make sure that their tragedy will not be repeated," she added. "We will bury the history of the Abu Sayyaf bandits."

Ms Macapagal also said her administration wanted a "permanent solution" to the problem posed by the bandits. She said this would not happen "unless they surrender."

Adan said military integrees from the Moro National Liberation Front were giving support to government forces.

"(The MNLF integrees) know how to fight the bandits," he said. "They're familiar with the terrain."

Agence France Presse quoted Adan as saying that the demand aired earlier by the Abu Sayyaf—that Sulu, Basilan and Tawi-Tawi be declared a separate Islamic state under its control—was non-negotiable.

"Any political demand against the Constitution, the breakup of our territory, is definitely to be opposed by the government," he said.

Adan also said that some of the hostages who had escaped recalled their captors telling them about their desire for an independent state.

He noted that the demand was similar to those made by the MNLF, which signed a peace treaty with the government in 1996, and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, which is preparing for peace talks with the government.

'Failure of command'

Criticisms continued to mount regarding the military's failure to finish off the bandits cornered last weekend at the Dr. Jose Maria Torres Hospital in Lamitan.

A retired general said what happened was "a failure of command."

"The ground commander obviously did not consider that the main objective of the Abu Sayyaf was to escape," said the retired officer who asked not to be named.

But Adan said that "in a situation like this when troops are establishing a cordon, it takes time to put (it) up."

Asked whether the setback had sapped the soldiers' morale, Adan said that "for a time there was a sense of loss."

But fresh troops are being sent in and the military leadership is shoring up morale, he said.

While only about 60 of the bandits were inside the hospital, the military had marshaled two Army battalions, a battalion of Scout Rangers, a company consisting of four V-150 armored fighting vehicles, police and armed civilian volunteers.

Members of the AFP's elite Counter-Terrorist Force, which has among its weaponry advanced sniper rifles, had also been mobilized.

But the bandits managed to escape through the back of the hospital, taking nine of their original hostages from the Dos Palmas resort in Palawan and 11 members of the hospital staff.

According to the retired general, the military's claim that it withheld fire in order not to hurt the hostages doesn't wash.

"They had elite units—the Rangers—and these are trained good shots," he pointed out.

Adan lamely noted that "the cordon may not have been very well shut."

He said the troops had to contend with not only the bandits inside the hospital but also those deployed outside the compound.

It was the latter who ambushed government reinforcements that landed at the town wharf about five or six kilometers from the hospital, he said.

Residents had told television reporters that the bandits walked out of the back of the hospital compound unmolested.

To which Adan said: "The (government) forces at the rear were still at a distance from the back of the hospital."

He also dismissed claims made by Basilan Gov. Wahab Akbar and Lamitan parish priest Fr. Cirilo Nacorda that the military had engaged in indiscriminate firing.

Adan said those airing criticisms did not have a complete picture of what happened in Lamitan.

"These are perceptions by people who saw only the TV footage," he said, adding:

"When the bandits went into Lamitan, our forces were concentrated in Tuburan."

'Temporary problem'

Vice President and Foreign Affairs Secretary Teofisto Guingona, together with Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon and National Security Adviser Roilo Golez, yesterday briefed members of the diplomatic corps on developments in Basilan and government efforts to neutralize the Abu Sayyaf.

Asked by reporters about feedback from the foreign community, Golez said: "They understand that this is a temporary problem we are encountering."

Gordon said the diplomatic corps acknowledged that the hostage taking at Dos Palmas involved "one locality, one armed band."

He said he asked the ambassadors and foreign ministry officials present not to issue "sweeping advisories" and to "localize" these to Basilan or Sulu.

"It's not happening in Luzon or anywhere else," he pointed out.

According to Gordon, the briefing showed that "the country is in order" and that the efforts "to promote it and to assure the foreign community are being done professionally."

Libyan Ambassador Salem Adam said the foreign community was supporting the Macapagal administration's efforts "to crush the Abu Sayyaf once and for all."

"That is the only solution. No ransom, no negotiation. Just crush them," Adam said.

He also said foreign countries were "collectively ready" to help the Philippines resolve the crisis.

"Once the Philippine government asks for our help, we will be ready," he said. *With a report from Rocky Nazareno*

Iranian, Lebanese face police probe

AN Iranian and a Lebanese may have helped the Abu Sayyaf in the May 27 kidnapping of three Americans and 17 Filipinos from the Dos Palmas resort in Palawan, according to a police intelligence report.

The report, obtained by reporters, said the two men checked in and occupied separate cottages in the resort three days before the abductions.

When they checked out a day before the attack, they did not proceed directly to the airport but rented a boat and went around the resort twice as if to case the area, it said.

The report said that when the kidnappers struck, they forcibly opened all the bay-front cottages except for those rented by the pair, identified in the report as Iranian Banerol Naghsh Mansour and Lebanese Bouldhourjian Nazared.

But the two men rejected any involvement in the attack, according to a television report quoting their lawyers.

Nazared is a businessman based in Dubai.

Mansour has been a resident of the Philippines since 1977, having been married to a Filipino physician. He is supposed to hold a press conference today to deny participation in the kidnappings. According to the police report, resort staff found several prepaid mobile phone cards in the two men's cottages.

"It was as though the abductors were certain with their objectives," the report said.

Armed Forces spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan said they were checking the intelligence report "to establish its veracity."

The military has previously linked the Abu Sayyaf to terrorist cells abroad. *AFP*

Basilan governor says Romero kin paid ₱10M

(From page A1)

AKBAR: Romero's escape was "just for show." ERIK ARAZAS

Edilberto Adan maintained that as far as the military knew, Romero escaped from his captors.

"What we know was that Mr. Romero, at the height of the fighting in Basilan, was able to run away from the hospital, dragging with him the 8-year-old boy and one woman," Adan said.

"We are not privy to such talks of negotiation, if any," he added.

Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes admitted having received reports that some individuals were trying to make contact with the Abu Sayyaf.

"There are definitely reports that individuals are trying to establish channels with the Abu Sayyaf to try for the negotiated release of some of the hostages," Reyes said.

"We are, of course, monitoring this, but we have no definite information as to its veracity," he added.

Not sanctioned

Akbar refused to identify who negotiated for Romero's release and would only say that the person was acting purely on behalf of Romero's family. He stressed the negotiation was not sanctioned by either the government or the military.

He said he knew about the ransom payment because some of his men had penetrated the Abu Sayyaf's ranks

Akbar said Romero's escape was "just for show" so the military would not know that the Abu Sayyaf received money

"We learned that (the Abu Sayyaf got) P10 million. They got money so they're happy," Akbar said during a news forum at the L'eau Vive restaurant in Manila.

Akbar claimed the two other captives (Maria Rizza Santos and RJ Recio) who were rescued with Romero last June 2 were released "for free"

Romero, the former Manila Times owner, chairs R-II Builders, the contractor for the Smokey Mountain rehabilitation project.

He repeatedly thanked the military for his rescue.

"I credit my freedom and that of my three fellow hostages to the full-scale campaign launched by President Macapagal against the Abu Sayyaf and her policy to deny ransom to the dreaded terrorists," Romero said when he was presented to the President in Makati after his release.

Up to P25 million

The governor believes that Romero's family paid more than P10 million and that the family's negotiator probably pocketed part of the supposed ransom. But he admitted that he had no concrete basis for his accusations against the negotiator.

"The rumor is (that the actual ransom paid was) P25 million. But we learned (that the Abu Sayyaf got) P10 million. This means the negotiator got half of the money," he said.

He claimed that an intermediary for the family had earlier approached him to negotiate for Romero's release. But he turned down the request because he was strongly against paying any ransom to the Abu Sayyaf.

"The Palace intermediary or the military has nothing to do with this. It was the family who worked on this. The local government unit and the military were not involved," Akbar insisted.

Akbar said he did not know if there were similar ransom negotiations for the other captives

"But according to the reports of my people who are inside, there will be additional money," he said.

Asked if the negotiator was among those who played a role in the Sipadan hostage negotiations last year, Akbar replied: "This is totally new."

Then he asked reporters not to ask him any more questions: "Even if you cut off my tongue I won't reveal who it was."

William Castillo

AFP spokesperson Adan said the government intermediary is already making contact with the Abu Sayyaf rebels, but he stressed that the negotiation is not for the ransom of the hostages.

"The idea is to convince them to release the hostages," Adan said.

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao yesterday identified the Palace-appointed intermediary as William Castillo, who, he said, was familiar with the Abu Sayyaf.

"He has been in touch with the Abu Sayyaf leaders and the group knows him," Tiglao said.

Adan stressed that the talks should not be regarded as a softening of the government's no-negotiation policy with the Abu Sayyaf.

"Fighting is part of the negotiations. Without fighting, the other party may not be able to negotiate," he said.

"The strategy is to apply military pressure and at the same time communicate with them," he added. *With a report from Martin Marfil*

Gloria ponders her options

(From page A1)

DENNIS SABANGAN

A MOTHER inquires from a soldier if it is safe for her family to go home in Lamitan, Basilan.

martial law "can be imposed only in cases of invasion or rebellion when the public safety requires it."

"There is no invasion. Neither is there rebellion. What we have in Basilan is plain lawlessness," Lim said.

Drilon said the Abu Sayyaf was engaged in banditry, which, according to him, the Armed Forces could very well suppress without resorting to a martial law declaration.

Drilon said there was also no need for Ms Macapagal to issue a formal declaration of a state of emergency in Basilan and Sulu.

The President as commander in chief of the Armed Forces, can call out the AFP to prevent or suppress lawless violence, according to Drilon.

"A formal declaration of a state of emergency does not grant the President additional or special powers. So I do not understand why government spokesmen keep on titillating the people with the prospect of a declaration of a state of emergency," he said.

The IBP said "emergency powers can be granted by Congress to the President to carry out a declared national policy only in times of war or other national emergency."

"War is between two states. Also, the situation in Basilan cannot be stretched right now into a 'national emergency,'" the IBP said.

Ms Macapagal said what was being reviewed was whether martial law should be declared at all.

Consultation

"I have to ask the opinion of the secretary of defense, the national security adviser and the lawyers on what can you do with martial law that you cannot do without it . . . will it make a difference?" Ms Macapagal said.

"Will declaring martial law bring about the moves that will make it end quickly or is it just a question of . . . putting in more resources?" the President said.

She said she wanted to discuss the idea with local officials of Basilan and Sulu.

Ms Macapagal admitted that there were numerous proposals placed before her, including the national ID system.

At the press conference in Malacañang, Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes batted for the implementation of the national ID system.

"I find merit (in that proposal) although it is perceived to have a negative impact on the population," he said.

With the ID, a person would have a single number that could be used in transactions like paying taxes, according to Reyes.

"Because of multiple numbers, we really cannot track down individuals. We really are in need of a national identification system," Reyes said.

Talk about martial law and a "limited" state of emergency cropped up after the Abu Sayyaf that took hostages from a Palawan resort slipped out of a military cordon in Lamitan, Basilan.

Checkpoints have been put up to hinder the movement of the Abu Sayyaf.

Human rights violations

The IBP and the human rights group Karapatan expressed fears that declaring martial law or a state of emergency would lead to the escalation of human rights abuses against civilians.

The IBP urged the government to consider effective police action. "This translates into better-trained troops with the much-needed equipment and competent commanders on the ground," the lawyers' group said.

The Ecumenical Movement for Justice and Peace said the fighting in Basilan was already taking its toll on civilians.

"Even if the military have not fired their guns at the innocent civilians, the unarmed populace of Sulu and Basilan will definitely be the first victims of a militarist state imposing curfew, checkpoints, arbitrary arrests, blockades, limited movements and other military-imposed restrictions," the EMJP said.

Basilan Rep. Gerry Salapuddin also opposed a state of emergency in his province

"This is not the solution to the problem because the ones that will end up victims are innocent and peace-loving civilians," Salapuddin said.

Mobilize well-trained troops

Instead of state of emergency, he urged the military to implement an effective counter-insurgency program against the Abu Sayyaf by mobilizing well-trained troops.

Fr. Roberto Layson, parish priest of Pikit, North Cotabato who was assigned for nine years at the Diocese of Jolo, also suggested that an elite force be mobilized to combat the Abu Sayyaf.

"We have the elite forces of the PNP with all the modern gadgets. Why not use them?" Layson said.

Eid Kabalu, spokesperson of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, said a state of emergency in Basilan would just be a "decoration."

"What's happening in Basilan is an eye-opener to the government. Even without emergency powers, the whole might of the AFP is in Mindanao," Kabalu said.

"The government should see the parameters if it wants to declare a state of emergency. It should safeguard the civilians," said Bishop Honesto Pacana of the Diocese of Bukidnon.

In Cagayan de Oro City, Fr. Tonio Ablon of the Philippine Independent Church and Karapatan-Misamis Oriental spokesperson, said a state of emergency in Basilan was not needed because the government had already offered a P100-million bounty for the heads of Abu Sayyaf leaders. *With reports from Cynthia D. Balana in Manila; Julie Alipala-Inot, Joselle Badilla, Ayan C. Mellejor and Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

FBI giving technical help, says PNP

THE US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is providing technical help to the Philippine government to help resolve a hostage crisis, Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Leandro Mendoza said yesterday.

"They are providing us (with) technical assistance," said Mendoza. "Besides, the FBI was the mentor of the PNP on hostage negotiations."

Mendoza did not elaborate.

The Abu Sayyaf bandits are holding as many as 59 hostages in Basilan.

They first seized three Americans—including a missionary couple—and 17 Filipinos from a luxury resort on the island of Palawan on May 27.

Nine of the hostages escaped during a weekend clash with the Philippine Army but the rebels slipped through a military cordon after seizing dozens more hostages, including nurses, from a hospital.

On Sunday, a US Embassy official said the FBI wanted to interview some of the nine hostages who had escaped to determine the condition of the three American captives.

US charge d'affaires Michael Malinowski said the agents would seek local authorities' help to speak with the hostages.

US missionary couple Martin and Gracia Burnham—longtime Philippine residents originally from Kansas—and Californian Guillermo Sobrero were last spotted at the weekend when the rebels occupied the hospital.

The FBI has an office in Manila. *AFP*

Ragtag band running circles around military

(From page A1)

military was being constrained not only by the presence of hostages being used as shields, but by the lack of logistics for rapid troop deployment.

For 92 years, the external defense of the Philippines benefited from the presence of air and naval bases of its former colonizer, the United States.

But US troops pulled out in 1992 after their lease was terminated, leaving a fleet of hand-me-down naval and air force equipment.

A planned Armed Forces modernization, partly financed from the sale of the Army headquarters set on prime land near the Makati financial district, was scuppered by the Asian economic crisis in 1997.

And with government facing a huge budget deficit, it looks like the military will have to defer its wish list for multi-role fighters, corvettes, attack helicopters, and surface to air missiles, among others.

"Rightly so, the public expects their Armed Forces to perform," Adan said. "But then one reality which the public should also understand is that what they provide is what they get."

Because the Army's budget also depends on a country's economy, "we the soldiers who train for warfare will deliver our best based on the equipment, the resources provided to us."

"And when crises like this strike and the nation focuses on their Armed Forces to deliver, we will do with whatever tools we have in our hands," he added.

Soldiers faced bigger risks now because the Abu Sayyaf has updated its arsenal from millions of dollars in ransom payments for Europeans and Malaysians they seized from the Malaysian diving resort of Sipadan last year, Adan said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has rejected any demand for ransom this time.

With a coastline stretching 36,289 kilometers, the Armed Forces has only one frigate and 60 patrol and coastal combatant vessels, according to the Asia-Pacific Military Balance.

The backbone of its Air Force is a squadron of fighter planes, the most sophisticated of which are 11 refurbished F-5 fighters.

When the Abu Sayyaf raided the Palawan beach resort, the Navy mustered a fleet of only 10 ships from different parts of the country to track them down, Adan said.

"But it's not the picture of a dragnet or a blockade. It's not a line of a hundred ships trying to put a screen," he said.

"We must understand that our ships are not that all modern. That's why we have been hungering for the modernization of our Navy—we need better radars (sic), faster ships."

The 106,000-strong military is also inadequate in terms of personnel, with the country facing the Abu Sayyaf and two other key rebels groups—the bigger Muslim separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and communist guerrillas.

Adan said military planners last year proposed beefing up troops in Mindanao with a 35,000-member militia force. But because of lack of funds, they settled for only 10,000.

Three months into the training, the government said it had no money. "So we had to stop. The men we were training had to go back to their homes, their firearms had to be returned," he said. *AFP*

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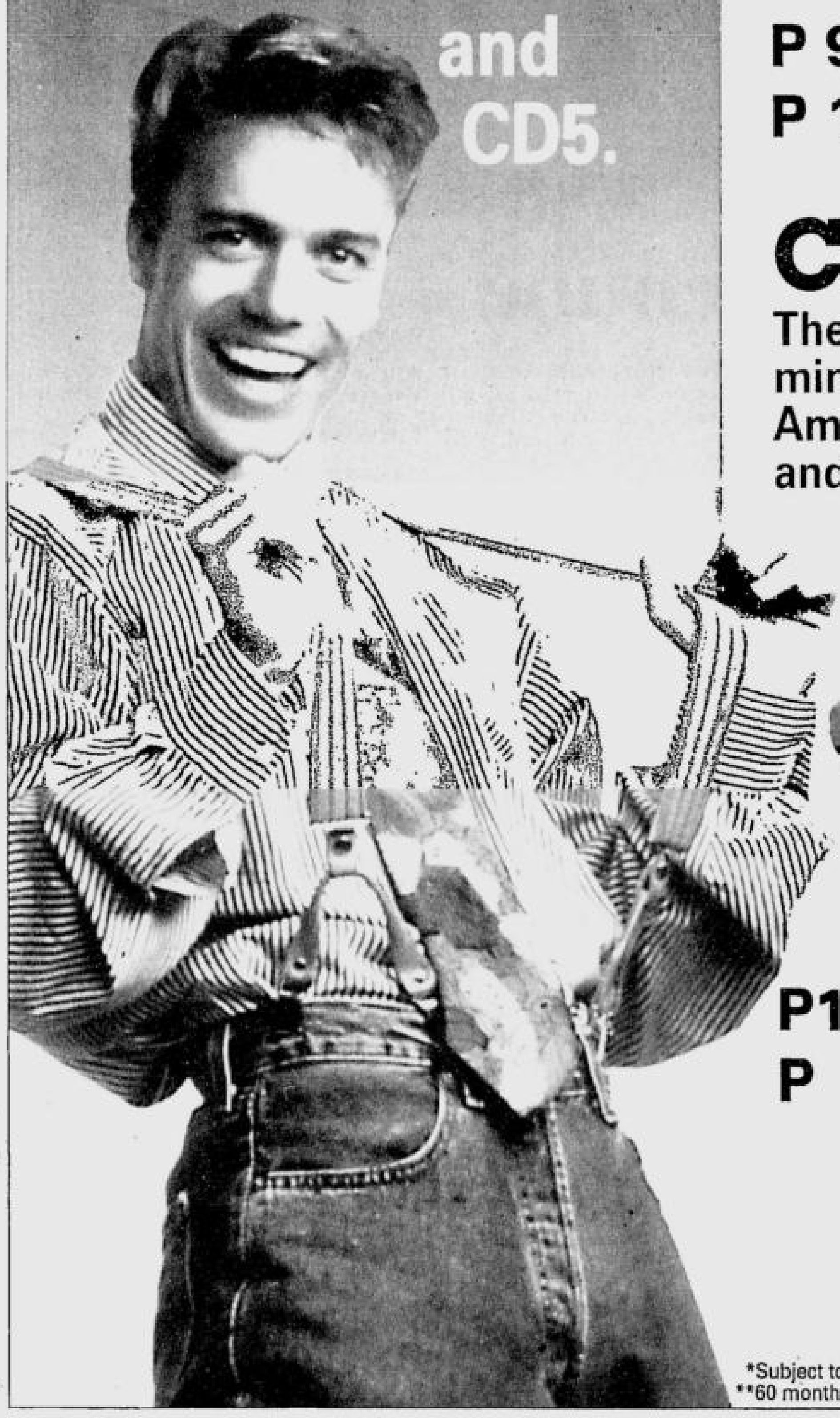

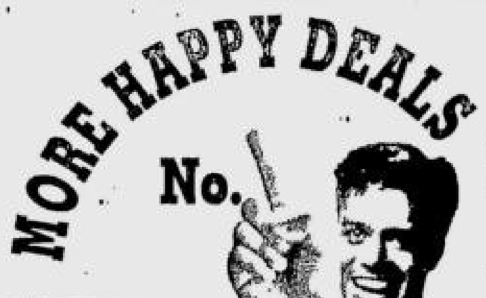

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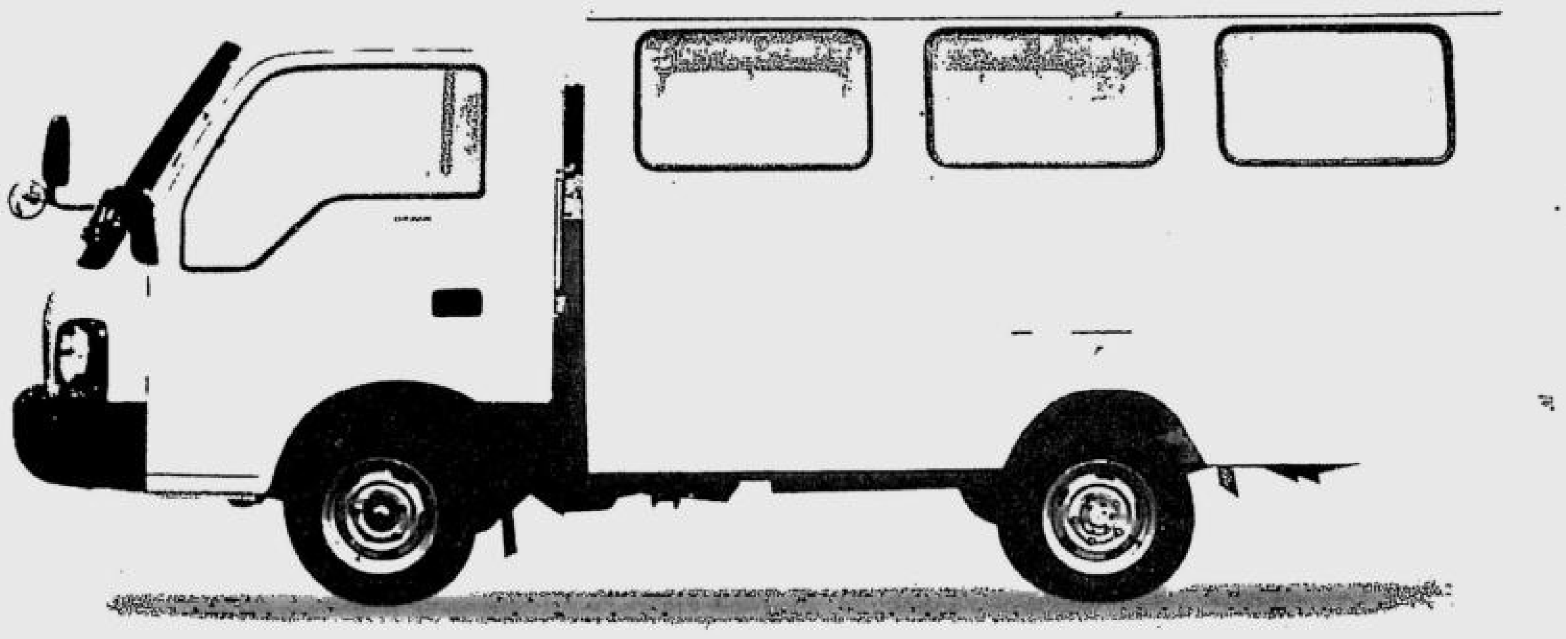

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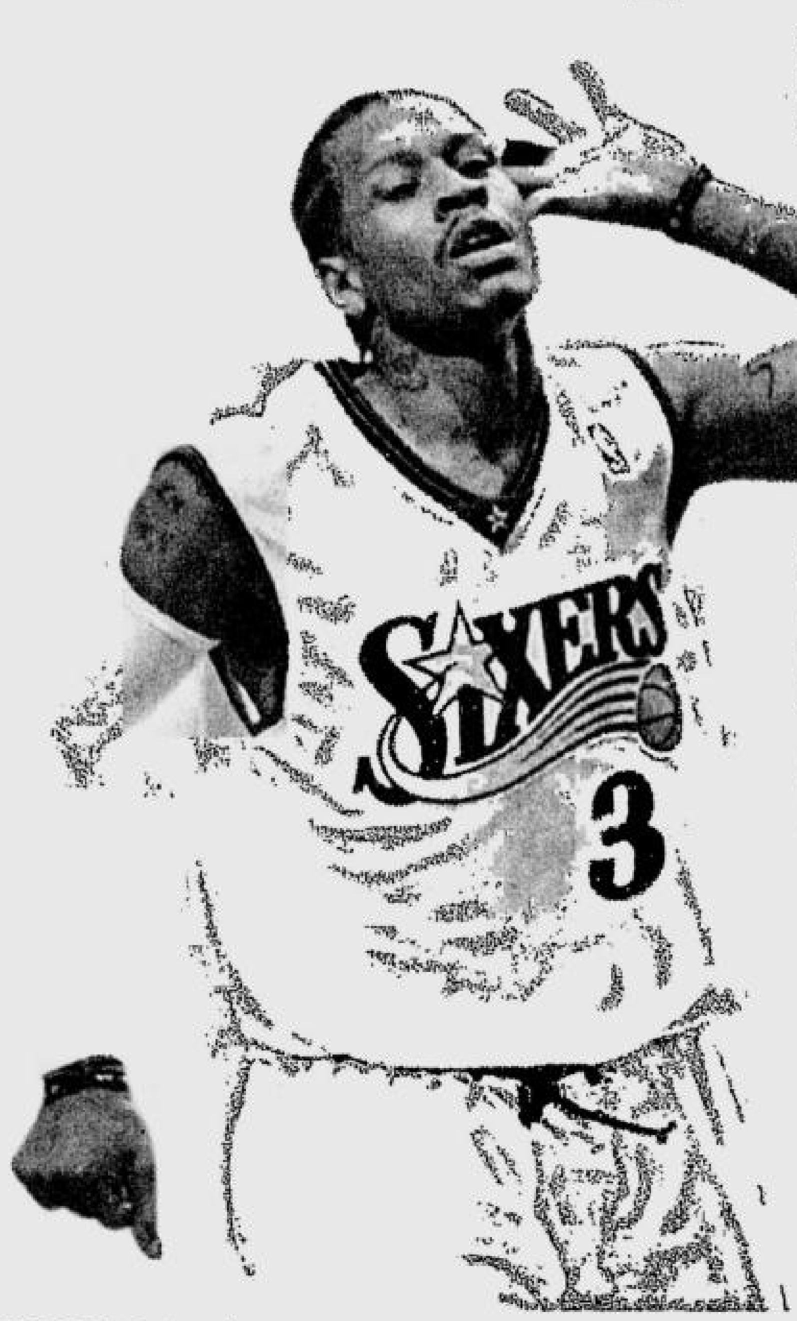
LAKERS-76ERS FINALS

Phil downplays Kobe-Allen matchup



IVERSON: Better player.

LOS ANGELES—For the first time in a long time, the Los Angeles Lakers showed up at practice and had something to focus on—the Philadelphia 76ers.

After more than a week of waiting, the Lakers finally know exactly who stands in the way of them becoming repeat champions—and perhaps the first team in NBA history to go undefeated through the postseason.

"We've been off for what, 20 years?" forward Robert Horry said Monday. "So, it's going to be hard for us to get our rhythm."

While the vast majority of the NBA universe expects the Lakers to roll over the 76ers in a mismatch, the players themselves were taking a much more piecemeal approach to getting ready.

Monday was a day for studying their opponent, Tuesday will be a day for shaking off some rust. Wednesday (Thursday morning in Manila) will be the day when the talking stops and the basketball begins with Game 1 at the Staples Center.

Too much respect

"If you asked the players who are going to play whether they believe we're an overwhelming favorite, right now we have too much respect for the Philadelphia 76ers and what they've accomplished to think we're that big of a favorite," forward Rick Fox said. "That's a dangerous mindset to have."

Still, there are plenty of legitimate reasons why the Lakers are expected to win fairly easily.

They have a 19-game winning streak, including 11 straight in the postseason. They have Shaquille O'Neal, the most dominant big man in the game, and Kobe Bryant, who is considered in most NBA cities to be the pre-eminent shooting guard in the league.

Of course, the folks in Philadelphia would take issue with that assessment, arguing that Allen Iverson proved this season that he is the better player.

After all, he didn't win the MVP award for nothing.

Lakers coach Phil Jackson used the words "little rascal" and "monster" in discussing Iverson after the Lakers practiced for about two hours at their training facility in El Segundo, California.

While praising Iverson and his teammates for their resilience and talent, Jackson also said that the Iverson-Bryant matchup would not be the key one in this series.

In his opinion, the marquee matchup is O'Neal vs Dikembe Mutombo.

"Obviously Iverson vs. Kobe brings a lot of attention, but the matchup is going to be Dikembe and Shaquille, and if they choose to double-team (O'Neal) that will open up the game for us," he said.

Split meetings

The teams split their two meetings in the regular season, both of which took place before the 76ers acquired Mutombo from the Atlanta Hawks, for Theo Ratliff, Toni Kukoc and Nazr Mohammed.

Mutombo and O'Neal did not face each other this season, although they have played each other in the past during then playoffs.

"Anybody can guard Shaq, it's a question of whether anybody can stop him," Horry said.

In 1996, O'Neal's Orlando Magic defeated Mutombo's Atlanta Hawks 4-1 in the Eastern Conference semifinals before Jackson's team at the time, the Chicago Bulls, swept the Magic in the conference finals.

"I remember preparing to play against Orlando, and I was impressed that particular year that Shaquille dismantled Atlanta's team with Dikembe in there," Jackson said.

Mutombo and O'Neal have faced each other 12 times in regular season games, with O'Neal's teams going 10-2. O'Neal outscored Mutombo 22.0 to 10.9 in those games, although Mutombo averaged 12.7 rebounds to O'Neal's 10.5.

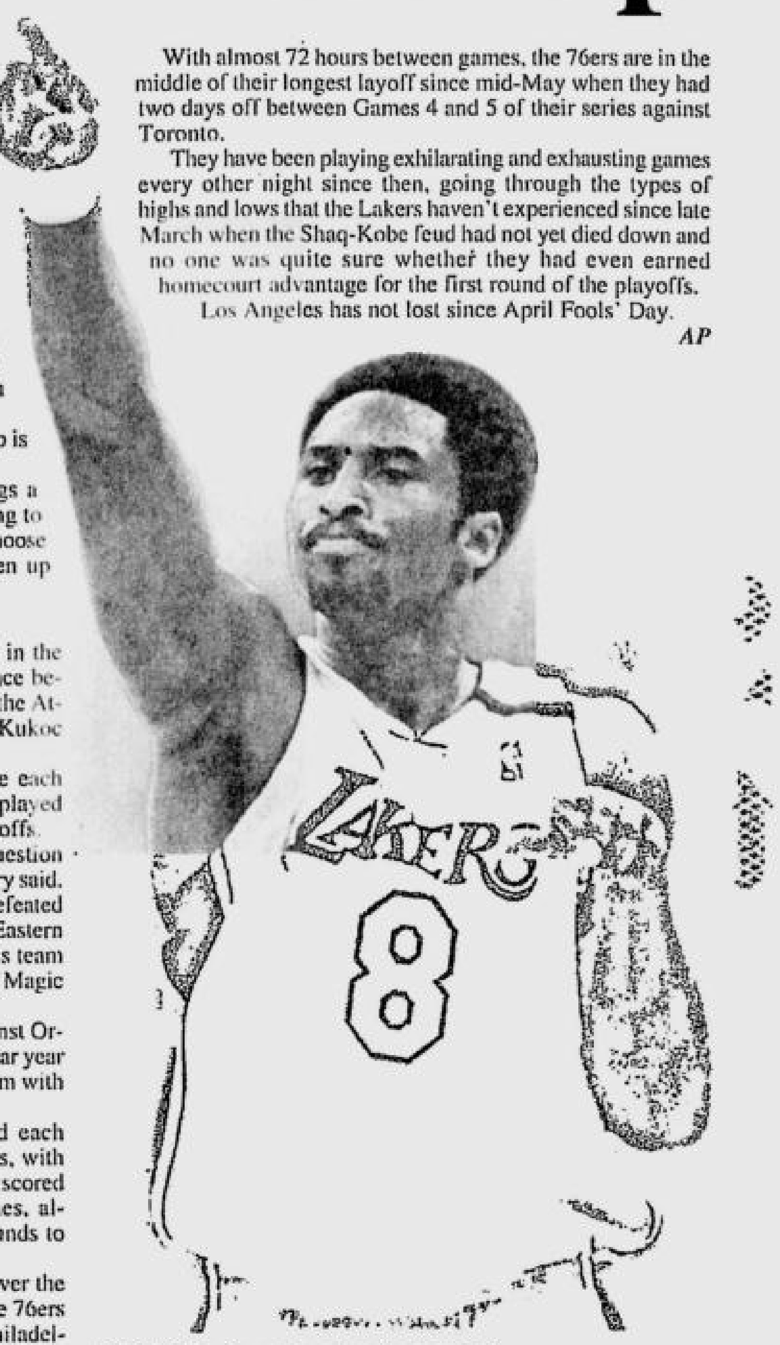
Coming off their Game 7 victory over the Milwaukee Bucks on Sunday night, the 76ers gathered at their practice facility in Philadelphia before flying cross-country.

With almost 72 hours between games, the 76ers are in the middle of their longest layoff since mid-May when they had two days off between Games 4 and 5 of their series against Toronto.

They have been playing exhilarating and exhausting games every other night since then, going through the types of highs and lows that the Lakers haven't experienced since late March when the Shaq-Kobe feud had not yet died down and no one was quite sure whether they had even earned homecourt advantage for the first round of the playoffs.

Los Angeles has not lost since April Fools' Day.

AP



BRYANT: Premier shooting guard.

NBA stars had sex with dancers, says manager

ATLANTA—The owner of a top Atlanta strip club regularly set up sex shows and paid dancers to have sex with professional athletes, a former club manager testified at a federal racketeering trial.

Gold Club owner Steve Kaplan played host to members of the New York Knicks, Charlotte Hornets and Indiana Pacers when the basketball teams were in town, Thomas "Ziggy" Sicignano testified Monday.

Sicignano said Kaplan paid dancers to have sex with former Knicks Patrick Ewing and John Starks, Reggie Miller and Antonio Davis of the Pacers and Atlanta Braves outfielder Andruw Jones.

Kaplan and six others face racketeering charges, including accusations of credit card fraud, prostitution, loansharking and funneling money to the Gambino crime family.

Ewing and other Knicks visited the club for a private party in 1997, much to the delight of Kaplan, a New York native whose support for the team bordered on obsessive, Sicignano said.

The law—as well as club rules—prohibits dancers from having physical contact with patrons, he said.

"We were saying: 'There are no rules tonight. The owner's in the room,'" he said.

Sicignano said Kaplan paid dancers to put on a sex show and then have sex with Starks and three Knicks players in hotel rooms in Atlanta, and later did the same for Miller, Davis and other Pacers in 1997.

Spokesmen for the Knicks, the NBA and individual athletes all declined to comment when the allegations were raised earlier this year. *AP*

Loss to Bulls haunts Brown, Sixers

PHILADELPHIA—Larry Brown shrugged off a loss to the last-place Chicago Bulls on the last day of the regular season. It's haunting the Philadelphia 76ers now.

The Sixers, making their first trip to the NBA Finals in 18 years, would have had homecourt advantage over the Los Angeles Lakers if they beat Phil Jackson's old team on April 18.

Instead, Allen Iverson and Dikembe Mutombo sat out and Brown rested most of his other starters to prepare for the playoffs. It took a late 10-0 run for the Bulls, who finished with a league-worst 15-67 record, to beat Philadelphia's reserves, 92-86.

The loss tied the Sixers with the Lakers at 56-26.

Los Angeles got the homecourt edge on a tiebreaker—better record against the opposite conference. As a result, Game 1 of the championship series is at the Staples Center on Wednesday night.

After the loss to Chicago, Brown said he wasn't looking ahead to the finals, didn't want to risk injury to any of his key players and was more concerned with getting out of the East.

The Sixers beat the Milwaukee Bucks, 108-91, Sunday in Game 7 of the Eastern conference finals to advance to the championships for the first time since the 1982-83 season, the last time any franchise in Philadelphia won a title.

Brown said Monday he doesn't have any regrets about the way he handled the Bulls' game.

"I didn't rest the guys just to rest them," Brown said. "They were legitimately hurt. I'm not smart enough to plan that far ahead. If I had to do it all over again, I'd do it the same way."

Iverson didn't play against the Bulls because he had been placed on the injured list with bursitis in his right elbow, an injury that continues to bother him and forces him to wear a protective sleeve on his arm. Mutombo had a sprained toe and missed his only game since coming to the Sixers in a trade on Feb. 22.

Aaron McKie said the Sixers aren't worried about opening the series in Los Angeles because they're used to having a disadvantage. Philadelphia has overcome numerous injuries throughout the season, including a broken foot that has kept forward George Lynch out of the last 10 games.

"Them having the homecourt is just another adverse situation and we're motivated by that," McKie said.

The Sixers, coming off consecutive seven-game series, are running into a team that hasn't lost in more than two months. The Lakers have won 19 straight, including 11 playoff games.

"When things don't look good, people count us out and that's when we pull together," McKie said. "We don't want to go out there just to be there. Our focus is to win the series. Whether it's here or there doesn't make a difference."

Iverson, who has 70 points in his last five quarters, including 44 in Game 7 Sunday, relishes Philadelphia's underdog status. *AP*

FRENCH OPEN

Agassi squeaks past Argentine

AGASSI

PARIS—Andre Agassi moved a step closer to a second French Open singles crown and a second Slam of the year after Australia after a five-set beating here Monday of Argentine 16th seed Franco Squillari.

Agassi overcame some lapses of concentration to win 4-6, 6-2, 6-4, 1-6, 6-0 in 2 hours and 59 minutes on the Philippe-Chatrier Centre Court and book a Wednesday meeting with French 10th seed Sebastien Grosjean, who earlier hammered Spain's Galo Blanco, second round slayer of Pete Sampras, 6-3, 6-4, 6-1.

"It's getting better and better with each match," said Agassi, whose win here two years ago made him one of only five men to win all four Grand Slam singles titles.

Despite a poor claycourt warm-up for the event Agassi ultimately wore down a rival six years his junior as he looks to make it a lucky 13th visit to the City of Light, which holds such fantastic memories for him.

Squillari, a 25-year-old left-hander from Buenos Aires, was the man Agassi beat at the start of his successful 1999 campaign and he clearly relished swatting the same victim again as he raised his game in the fifth set against a tiring foe.

Grosjean, ranked fourth in the Champions Race, earlier pounded Blanco into the red clay.

The 23-year-old from Marseille lived up to his nickname "The Skateboard Kid" as he sped through the tie on the Suzanne Lenglen Court.

Earlier, Australian sixth seed Lleyton Hewitt completed a match held over from Sunday against Argentine Guillermo Canas, winning 3-6, 6-7 (3/7), 6-2, 6-3, 6-3 in 4 hours and 12 minutes.

Spanish 13th seed Alex Corretja, a finalist in 1998, meanwhile swept past Frenchman Fabrice Santoro 6-2, 6-3, 6-4 to set up a Wednesday meeting with Swiss teen Roger Federer, a 3-6, 6-3, 6-4, 6-2 winner over Wayne Arthurs of Australia. *AFP*

SPORTS ON TV

COMPILED BY LORENZO MANGUIAT

TENNIS: 2001 French Open—Day 10 Quarterfinals at 6 p.m. (r - tomorrow at 1 a.m.) on SkyCable 17
ATP Tennis Show at 11:30 p.m. (r) on ESPN
GOLF: PGA Memorial Tournament, Third Round at 8 a.m. (r) on Star Sports
U.S. Women's Open Golf Championship, Final Round at 12 midnight (r) on ESPN
BASKETBALL: Asian Basketball Show at 10:30 a.m. (r) on Star Sports
Unforgettabulls - 6th Championship Season of the Bulls at 11 p.m. on ESPN
BASEBALL: MLB - Cincinnati Reds vs St. Louis Cardinals at 9 a.m. (r) on ESPN
Baseball Max at 1:30 p.m. on ESPN
BOWLING: Professional Women's Bowling Association at 12 noon (r) on ESPN
World Tenpin Masters 2001 at 10 p.m. on ESPN
MOTOR SPORTS: International Motorsport News 2001 at 11 a.m. (r) on Star Sports
Motorsport Asia at 1 p.m. (r) on ESPN
AMA Motocross at 2 p.m. on ESPN

Silver Story heads Ongpin cast at MJC

RACING returns to the San Lazaro Hippodrome starting today as the Manila Jockey Club Inc. begins its five-day racing week schedule with special races topped by Sunday's running of the 2001 JV Ongpin Cup—the second leg of the Triple Crown championship series.

MJCI President Alfonso R. Reyno, Jr. said yesterday that a total of 52 races are scheduled at the country's premier racetrack, also the venue of the coming 22nd Gran Copa de Manila Racing Festival on June 24.

"The management of the Manila Jockey Club would like to reassure our patrons that they can look forward to another exciting week of horse races at the San Lazaro Hippodrome," added Reyno.

More than P1.6 million in prizes are at stake in the Ongpin Cup, a championship event among the very best three-year-old gallopers in the country.

Heading the field is Cojuangco Cup (first leg) winner Silver Story, a hot pick to sweep this year's series.

Only seven other horses have so far achieved the elusive Triple Crown grand slam, the last being Real Top, who made it in 1999.

Challenging Silver Story for the second leg of the series are a number of Cojuangco Cup returnees, including Sky Hawk (2nd), Batangas Entry (3rd), Hammerhead (4th), Ilocandia Slew (5th), Staunch Ally (7th), Silver Rose (8th), Gutmoore (9th) and Lord of All (11th).

Meanwhile, the newcomers in this year's Triple Crown event include upstarts Deputy Royale, Gifted Guest, Kitty Hawk and Tumataginting to complete the 13-horse lineup.

The winner of Ongpin Cup is guaranteed to receive an added purse of P1 million, while three other places (2nd to 4th) will get P375,000, P208,500 and P83,500, respectively, on top of the regular prize of the day.

BASEBALL RESULTS

National League—St. Louis 5, Cincinnati 2; Los Angeles 8, Arizona 4; San Francisco 3, San Diego 1.

American League—N.Y. Yankees 7, Boston 6; Minnesota 11, Cleveland 10; Seattle 11, Texas 6. *AP*

Party time

WHAT CAN I SAY

Bebo Quiros

THIRTEEN horses are coming to the party on Sunday, 10 June 2001, at the Manila Jockey Club. The occasion is this year's edition of the J.V. Ongpin Cup, the traditional second leg of the Philracom Triple Crown. Twelve of the entries are part and parcel of the beer-and-pretzel invitees. Supposedly, Patrick Uy's Silver Story is a shoo-in to take home the champagne. Who knows? Stranger things have happened. Philippine horse racing is like traipsing through the twilight zone. Or a mine field. Anything can happen.

We love longshots. That's how every other horse coming to the dance and willing to settle for the crumbs will be politely described. One horse we particularly like, not only because of her workmanlike second in the Cojuangco Cup, but also because of her pedigree, is Ochie Santos' Sky Hawk, by deceased Piker (Mr. Prospector/Thill by Iron Ruler) out of Corralera, a 1984 Cormorant (His Majesty/Song Sparrow by Tudor Minstrel) mare whose second dam, Highness, is full sister to Bold Ruler (Nasrullah/Miss Disco).

Corralera has classic ties. We saw her sire, Cormorant, lead the way to the first turn in the 1977 Preakness which was won by the great Seattle Slew on the way to his unbeaten Triple Crown season. Cormorant was basically a speed horse, more Tudor Minstrel than His Majesty. However, he did sire, Go For Gin who won the 1994 Kentucky Derby and was second in the Preakness and the Belmont.

Piker, who was a tried and tested speed sire, originally stood at Barry Butzer's Sun Valley Farm in Orrville, Ohio. When the Butzer family, good friends of Manny Viray, moved their operations to Lexington, Kentucky, only their broodmares went with them. Piker was subsequently purchased for the Santos clan. Piker's dam, Thill, is by Iron Ruler. Iron Ruler, a successful Never Bend sire, was responsible for Iron Constitution, who came in a far second to Seattle Slew in the aforementioned Preakness.

To tie these 1974 Preakness antecedents to Corralera is her second dam Highness, full sister to Bold Ruler, great grandsire of Seattle Slew. The Preakness is the second leg of the American Triple Crown. The J.V. Ongpin Cup is the second leg of our own Triple Crown. Who knows? Stranger things have happened.

Good luck, Ochie. See you on Sunday.

Weekend classics

Bill Rose must be grinning from ear to ear. Widden Stud, tucked in the heart of Widden Valley in New South Wales, is home during the southern hemisphere breeding season to Anabaa (Danzig-Balbonella/Gay Mecene) champion European sprinter, 1996; champion 2-yr-old sire, France 2000; champion First Season Sire, France, 2000. To emphasize his arrival as a serious sire in 2001, Anabaa sired last Sunday's winner of the Group I Prix du Jockey Club (French Derby), Anabaa Blue. Anabaa Blue was ridden by 20-yr-old jockey Cristophe Soumillon. He beat his Prix Lupin (G I) conqueror, Chichicastenango, to the finish line by half a length. Anabaa Blue was bred by Haras d' Etreham who own majority of Anabaa and was purchased by his trainer, Carlos Lerner at the 1999 Deauville Yearling Sales for $105,755. It was Lerner's first success in the classics.

The Belmont Stakes will be run this Saturday, 9 June 2001. Coverage on NBC begins at 5PM Eastern. Five hours earlier, the Vodafone English Derby will be run at Epsom Downs. Probable Belmont starters are A.P. Valentine, Balto Star, Buckle Down Ben, Dollar Bill, Dr. Greenfield (Ire), Invisible Ink, Monarchos, Point Given, Thunder Blitz. Declared entries in the Epsom Derby are Cashel Bay, Chancellor, Dilshaan, Galileo, Golan, Ice Dancer, King Carew, Mr. Combustible, Perfect Sunday, Putra Sandhurst, Storming Home, Sunny Glen, Tobougg, Wareed.

While the Belmont really is shaping up to be a rematch between Monarchos, winner of the Kentucky Derby and Point Given, winner of the Preakness Stakes, we will be cheering for an underdog, the Peaks and Valleys (Mt. Livermore) hard luck Dollar Bill. In his lead up to the Derby, Dollar Bill almost fell mid-stretch in the Louisiana Derby. He was bumped at the break in a speed favoring Blue Grass Stakes and simply lost interest. In the Derby he was checked badly at the 3/8ths pole, almost coming to a halt, and finished 34 1/4 lengths in arrears. In the Preakness, he was badly checked again at the 5/8ths pole, came nine wide at the top of the stretch and still finished the fastest of the lot, coming in fourth. Just a little luck in the running is all he needs.

We will be cheering for Tobougg in the Epsom Derby. By Barathea (Sadler's Wells) whom we watched win the 1994 Breeders Cup Mile at Churchill Downs, Tobougg is the major hope for the Maktoum family. Barathea stood at Widden Stud for two year. He might come back down. We hope it's a Widden Stud double in the first two European majors.

Payla, Lerio win in Ireland

BELFAST, Ireland—Violito Payla and Arlan Lerio posted impressive victories Monday night as Team Caltex Philippines had an auspicious start in its bid for the country's first-ever gold medal finish in the World Amateur Boxing Championships at the Oddysey Arena here. Payla, campaigning in the flyweight division (51 kg.), outboxed Eraliev Ravkat of Uzbekistan, 23-13, while Lerio whipped South Korean Jo Suk Whan, 13-7, to similarly grab a seat in the next round of the bantamweight class (54 kg.).

SPORTS

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GIV stuns Shark, forces rubber match

Games tomorrow: (Makati Coliseum)
3:30 p.m.—Boysen-MLQU vs Univ. of Assumption
5:30 p.m.—Ana Freezers vs Welcoat Paints

By Dennis U. Eroa

UNDERMANNED GIV Beauty Soap unmasked Shark Energy Drink with an overpowering 58-34 victory last night, forcing a do-or-die clash for a final slot in the PBL Chairman's Cup at the Makati Coliseum.

Hardworking Eric de la Cuesta handcuffed leading MVP contender Chester Tolomia and the whole GIV crew used a suffocating zone defense all throughout to score a surprisingly lopsided victory against the Power Boosters.

Shark's 34-point total was an all-time low.

Tolomia had a forgettable night with five points all scored in the first quarter, while scoring partner Gilbert Malabanan fared even worse with four.

But what really took the bite out of the usually razor-sharp Shark attack was the terrible shows of slotman Rysal Castro, who did not enter the scorecard. Six-foot-seven Ervin Sotto was also a non-factor with two points. The duo combined for seven rebounds.

"We did everything right. Now, the momentum is on us and Shark will have to do the adjustments," said a beaming GIV mentor Nat Canson, who described Shark as an all-Tolomia team.

Egay Billones, Arnold Calo, Marlon Kalaw and De la Cuesta shone as GIV padded a 36-22 lead to a safe, 56-32 lead, 1:29 remaining.

GIV missed the services of suspended Edwin Bacani and center Marlon Legaspi, who sprained his right ankle in the 2nd period.

In the PYBL, Rob Bornancin delivered the telling blows as UP tripped Regent Cheeseballs, 69-64, and forced a playoff for a finals slot on Friday.

Scores:

GIV 58—Calo 15, Dela Cuesta 13, Billones 7, Kalaw 7, Gumatay 4, Sanz 4, Legaspi 3, Roldan 3, Epondulan 2, Peña 0.

SHARK 34—Baslides 10, Rodriguez 6, Tolomia 5, Malabanan 4, Gumpenberger 3, Ybanez 2, Sotto 2, Balares 1, Ortega 1, Castro 0, Robinson 0, Caceres 0, Limare 0, Garcia 0, Castro 0.

Quarterscores: 25-15, 36-22, 45-29, 58-34.

COMMISSIONER'S CUP

SMB battles Purefoods today; Gin vs Mobiline

By Marc Anthony Reyes

SAN MIGUEL Beer, the team everybody is expecting to go all-out to capture the 2001 PBA grand slam, doesn't even stop to think about it.

As far as SMB coach Jong Uichico is concerned, the Beermen should focus on winning the PBA Commissioner's Cup first before even dreaming of taking the prestigious Triple Crown.

They get to start that goal today when SMB, this year's All-Filipino Cup titlist and this conference's defending champion, takes on Purefoods at Philsports.

Armed with an intact local crew and a promising import in Nate Johnson, the Beermen clash with the Hotdogs, who will be fielding in NBA veteran David Wood, in the 7:30 p.m. game.

In the first game, the Ryan Fletcher-led Barangay Ginebra squares off with Mobiline, which will parade reinforcement Jerrod Ward, in the 5:15 p.m. match.

"We can't think of winning the grand slam until we've won the Commissioner's Cup," said Uichico. "So far, it's not in our minds yet."

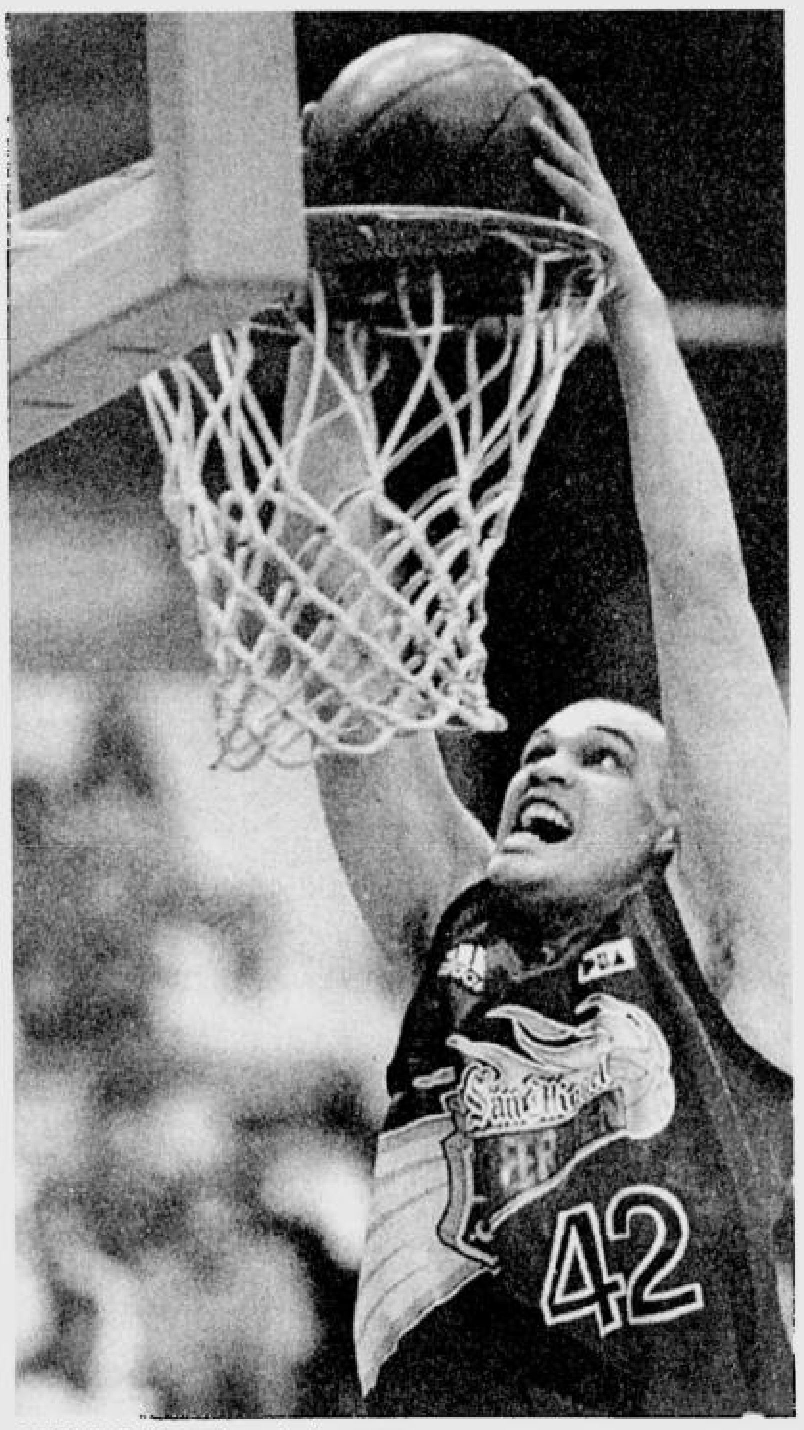
Just the same, the Beermen are preparing well with the acquisition of 23-year-old Johnson, who has a reputation of being a prolific slasher while playing for Camden High School and Louisville Cardinals in the NCAA.

In Camden, he has reportedly scored 81 points in one game, something that would lift some pressure from resident scorers Danny Ildefonso and Danny Seigle, who is suffering from back spasm.

"He's coachable and knows how to work with the system of the team," said Uichico of the 6-foot-5 Johnson, whom SMB hired during the AFC finals against Ginebra last month.

Against him, the Hotdogs are pinning their hopes on Wood, a 37-year-old NBA journeyman, who is expected to bring luster to the franchise's gloomy start this season. Purefoods wasted a twice-to-beat edge by losing to Ginebra in the AFC quarterfinals.

The Gin Kings are bringing back Fletcher, the gangling 6-foot-7 import they had last year in a hope to make successful follow-up to their AFC runner-up finish recently.



SEIGLE: Suffering from back spasm.

FILE PHOTO

GAMES TODAY:
(Philsports)
5:15 p.m.
Ginebra vs Mobiline
7:30 p.m.
Purefoods vs SMB

Batangas cagers seek lead vs Laguna five

Games today:
(San Luis Sports Complex)
3:00 p.m.—Nueva Ecija vs San Juan
4:30 p.m.—Batangas vs Laguna

By Roy Luarca

THE LBC Batangas Blades test their sharpness against the FedEx Laguna Lakers at 4:30 p.m. today in the Metropolitan Basketball Association First Phase at the San Luis Sports Complex.

Their roster bolstered by four former Manila Metrostars, the Blades edged the defending champions Andok's San Juan Knights, 84-81, in the opener on Sunday to serve notice of their title potential.

Like San Juan, Laguna is formidable and Romel Adducul, Eddie Laure and Alex Compton should play well if the Blades are to succeed in beating the Lakers at their homecourt.

The Knights will try to get back on track against the debuting Nueva Ecija Patriots in the first game at 3 p.m.

Adducul, the 6-foot-6 league MVP last year, will start with the 6-3 ½ Laure, 6-6 Stephen Antonio, 5-11 Compton and 5-7 Tonyboy Espinosa for Coach Nash Racela.

Opposing them will be 6-foot-8 Jeffrey Flowers, 6-5 Chris Nicdao, 6-4 Chris Clay, 6-2 Junel Mendiola and 6-1 Biboy Simon.

Apart from the glaring height discrepancy at the backcourt, Lakers mentor Bonnie Garcia can also parade a stronger backup crew of 6-5 Randy Lopez, 6-3 Michael Garcia, 6-1 Richard Melencio, 5-9 Tek Regidor and either 6-7 Val Domingo or 6-3 Jerome Barbosa.

Salud okays $.3-M purse for Peñalosa fight

LAWYER Rudy Salud, manager of WBC international super flyweight champion Gerry Peñalosa, yesterday decided to accept the offer of the camp of world champion Masamori Tokuyama for the mandatory title defense to be held in Tokyo for a total purse of $320,000.

Well-known Japanese boxing manager, matchmaker and journalist Joe Koizumi, who is the sole representative of the Tokuyama camp, said their final offer was reached after a "long discussion."

Under the offer, Peñalosa, the No. 1 contender, will receive $80,000—tax free. In addition, the Japanese promoter will provide five roundtrip plane tickets, coach class and appropriate hotel accommodation and meals plus Philippine television rights.

Aside from the first option of $100,000—plus five plane tickets in case Peñalosa wins the title— Koizumi said Salud would be "free to promote his first defense" in Manila on a condition that Peñalosa "will fight Tokuyama or some other boxer that Kanazawa shall select in his second defense in Japan."

Olympics of Cockfighting

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

ON June 18, 20 and 22, the second and final leg of the annual World Slasher 8-Cock Derby returns with a big bang, bigger and better than ever since it was launched in 1969 at the landmark Araneta Coliseum.

Billed as the "Olympics of Cockfighting," a widely accepted term which I coined with the backing of my former editor, the late Louie Beltran, a true-blue "sabungero" himself, this year's grand event will feature an international field of respected cocker-breeders. They will come from the United States, Canada, Japan, Malaysia, Guam and Hawaii.

Already confirmed entries are American Roger Roberts, a 62-year-old electrical engineer from Atlanta, Georgia, who won the first leg last January together with the formidable tandem of Filipino Tony Trebol and Rioichi Saito of Japan; many-time US Cocker of the Year Dan Gray of Louisiana, veteran campaigner Ray Alexander of Alabama, Chuck Berty of Oklahoma, Tom Cooper and Jeff Hudspeth of Cedar-Creek, Oregon's Brad Padgett and Bobby Jones, one of the most popular American cockers in the local derby scene.

On the other hand, the Philippines will be bannered by former world champions dapper Jorge "Nene" Araneta, two time Cocker of the Year, Jun Santiago of the awesome Thunderbird Firefly Group, Pampanga's popular Jun and Rudy Jingco, Rep. Rudy Albano of Mulawin fame, Danding Cojuangco, Peping Ricafort of PTK Yucatan, hotelier Biboy Enriquez of Bullrun Firebird, Mario Villamor, a past COTY winner; longtime partners Peping Cojuangco and Esting Teopaco of Cat Stingers and Eddie and Bomboy Araneta of Liza Galore.

Also entering the fray are current Cocker of the Year leaders engineer Gerry Fevidal of Geran, Gov. Ito Yñares and Boyboy Roa of PBRJ Binangonan and upcoming Alan Tan of Capitan III.

Battle-ready battle cocks, both imported and island-born, will match cutting prowess, speed and stamina in quality fights that will surely make the pulse beat faster, the main reason why the organizing National Cockers Association expects another capacity crowd at the Big Dome, now acclaimed by experts as the world's toughest cockpit.

Interestingly, the outcome of the World Slasher Derby will decide the winner of the roller-coaster COTY race. "It's the day of reckoning," said Nene Araneta. "Definitely, the results of this World Slasher Cup will be pivotal in deciding the Cocker of the Year."

Who will win, nobody knows.

But one thing is certain: the winner is the Filipino. In the eyes of the world, the Filipino projects are wholesome image for the Philippines because his sport of "sabong" is known far and wide for its tradition of honesty, sportsmanship and fair play. It is a sport among gentlemen because "sabungeros" could be trusted to honor their word, not to mention that it bridges the gap between the rich and the poor even between bitter foes inside the cockpits. No wonder "sabong" is the country's favorite pastime.

* * *

MEAT OF THE ISSUE. The long-running leadership conflict in the Basketball Association of the Philippines is not only confusing but a big letdown as well. Do you know that the central figures in the squabble, Lito Puyat and Tiny Literal, are both Ateneans? Where's esprit de corps here ? I also gathered that Literal has even raised the issue (before embattled POC) president Celso Dayrit) of Puyat's appointment as "acting president" of the BAP by former association head Freddie Jalasco. Literal said, "Mr. Puyat is never a vice president of the BAP. How could he be an "acting president?"

St. Benilde, Assisi shine

STANDINGS	W	L
St. Benilde	3	0
St. Francis	2	1
Far Eastern U	1	2
Univ. of Manila	1	2
Taipei University	1	2
Beijing Shougong	1	2

By Dennis U. Eroa

NCAA champion College of St. Benilde kept its unblemished slate with a thrilling 79-77 triumph over FEU, while St. Francis of Assisi needed overtime to tame titleholder University of Manila, 68-65, in the 2nd Asian Universities Basketball Championship at the oven-hot Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

Chinese Taipei University Sports Foundation made it a four-way tie for third with an ego-boosting 69-59 win over skidding Beijing Shougong Industrial College which missed the services of main man Jiao Jian to a knee injury.

Blazers Sonny Castro and Sunday Salvacion canned a free throw each in the final 15 seconds to repulse the rallying Tamaraws, newly-crowned Fr. Martin's Cup titlists.

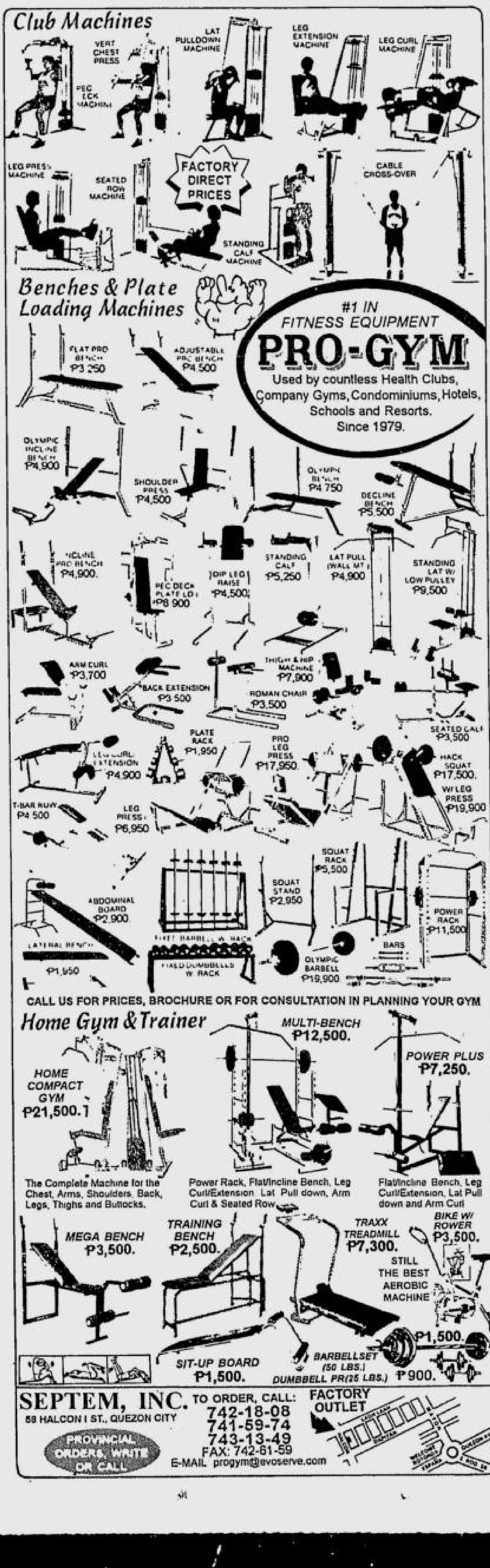
Despite missing the services of starting slotman Rysal Castro, the Tamaraws, powered by Leo Avenido, Michael Tolentino and Mark Isip, banged the boards with authority but lost control due to faulty free throw shooting.

FEU missed 14 of 26 gift shots and committed 18 turnovers. It also allowed St. Benilde to score 19 second-chance points.

St. Benilde thus upped its record to 3-0, while dropping FEU to 1-2, same cards of Chinese Taipei, Beijing and Shougong.

St. Francis, reigning National Student Champion, is in solo second with 2-1 card.

The week-long tournament is sponsored by Century Park Hotel, Star Sports of Korea, Globe Telecom, Healthy Options, Shangri-La Finest Cuisine, Baker's Fair, Caltex, Absolute Mineral Water, PCSO, Marsho Enterprises, Pagcor, IBC 13, and the Philippine Sports Commission.



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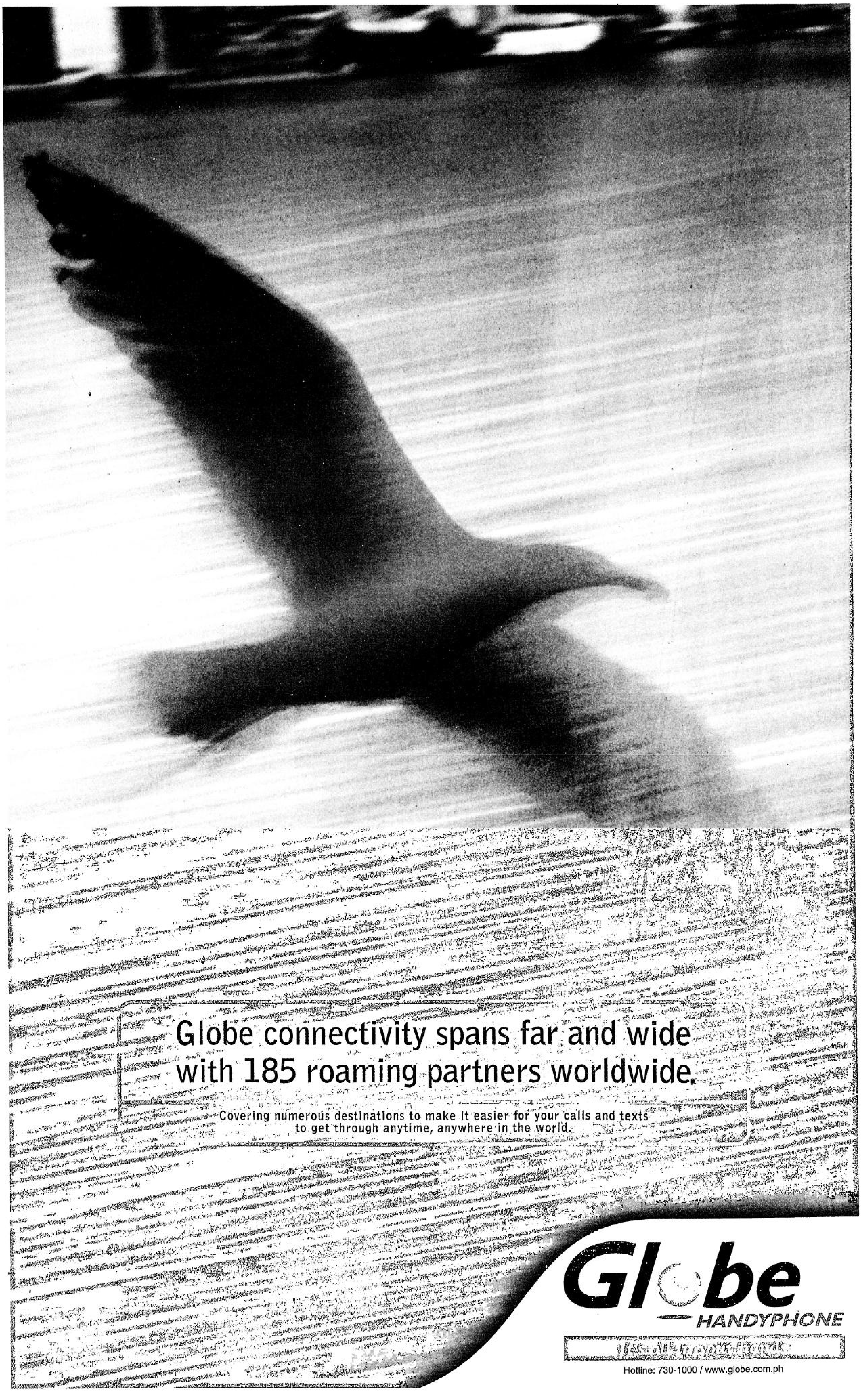

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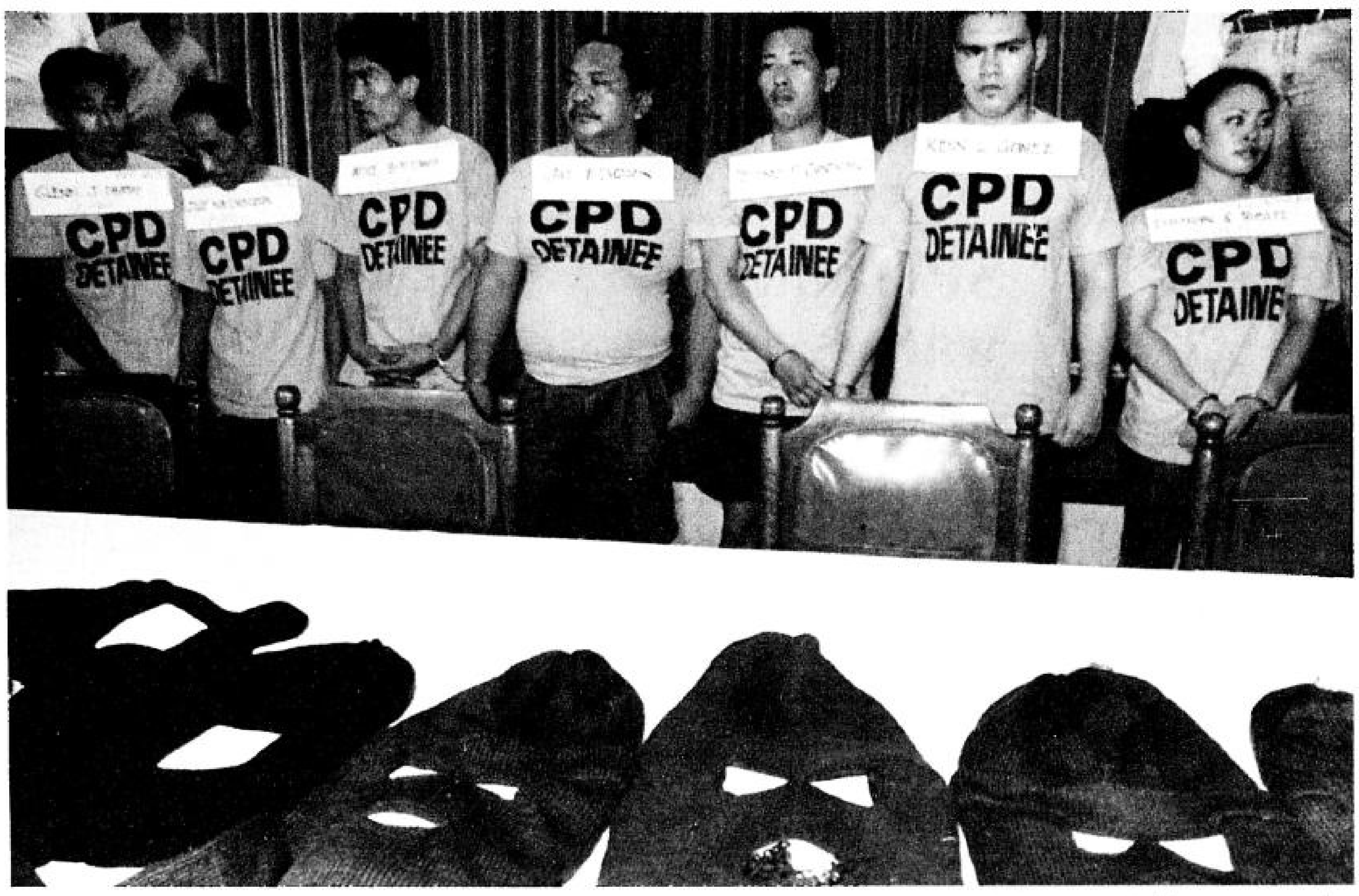
▨ **Man in jail for 6 years cleared of kidnapping** A26

METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

▨ **BJMP: Clean all jails** A27
▨ **Tondo cook kills self** A27

7 nabbed for UCPB attack



SUSPECTED "Bonnet Gang" members, including the alleged leader's son (second from right) and live-in partner (right), are presented to the press in Camp Crame. VAL HANDUMON

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

POLICE on Monday night arrested seven suspected gang members, including a woman, just seven hours after the foiled robbery attempt at a United Coconut Planters Bank branch in Quezon City where a security guard was shot dead and seven others were wounded.

Police identified those arrested as Jose Pactacon, 45, said to be a former member of the now-defunct Philippine Constabulary, Kenn Gomez, 23, Teotimo Juntalan Jr., 38, Glenn Obatay, 41, Jose Cabrera, 39, Ariel Miranda, 35, and Emma Lyn Robles, 29.

The Philippine National Police chief, Director General Leandro Mendoza, presented them to the media in Camp Crame yesterday afternoon.

Insp. Rudy Jaraza, chief of the Central Police District Homicide Division, said the suspects are members of the "Bonnet Gang" that carried out "90 percent" of bank robberies in Metro Manila since last year.

They were arrested in successive raids on

7 NABBED/ A26

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AUDIOTORIUM 21 West Ave. Quezon City	SABOR LATINO	374.2330/373.5574
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Cowboy Grill Aguirre St. Marikina	DECADE SOCIETY REPLICA/HEARTBEAT	NO ENTRANCE FEE 525.1474/525.4269
Cowboy Grill Remedios St. Malate	GOALKEYS FEEDBACK	NO ENTRANCE FEE ☎ 521.8143
Cowboy Grill Novaliches Q.C.	MAEGAN AGUILAR SWEETBLOOD/FAT 16	NO ENTRANCE FEE ☎ 936.9757
Friends @ the square St. Francis Sq. Ortigas Center	ICEBOX	CROSS OVER JUNE 9/635.0279
Jer's II Real Calamba, Laguna	RSVP	NO ENTRANCE NO CONSUMABLE
KAMPO 2088 West Avenue Q.C.	LIMITED EDITION MAGIC TOUCH/DEGREE	P 200 CONSUMABLE 373.5110/373.7181
Examiner's LITE n'LIVE Examiner St. Q.C.	AEGIS NXTPAGE	P 150 CONSUMABLE 373.222/373.7183
Music Warehouse In front of Central Market	ELEMENTS OF STYLE PUZZLES	FREE ENTRANCE 735.1280/735.1405
PADI'S POINT MANILA San Marcelino across SM Mla.	7 SECONDS	NO ENTRANCE FEE 527.6180/527.6211
TIA MARIA'S Remedios cor. Carolina	VERSE 2 CROSS TOWN	NO ENTRANCE FEE ☎ 522.0429
Tropical FOREST Cafe · Grill · Restaurant TM Kalaw Luneta Manila	REAL GROOVE	P 25 UNLIMITED RICE ☎ 400.7435/39

WEDNESDAY JUNE 6 912-8983

Malonzo charged with contempt

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

FOR DECLARING himself winner in the Caloocan mayoral race despite the suspension of proclamation of winners in the city, Mayor Reynaldo Malonzo is facing contempt charges filed against him by rival Rep. Luis "Baby" Asistio.

Also charged with contempt before the Commission on Elections were Councilor Edgar Erice who ran for Congress, and council candidate Teben Cunanan.

Asistio urged the Comelec to cite the respondents for contempt for proclaiming themselves winners on May 27. He also

MALONZO/ A26

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HONDA

Man in jail for 6 years cleared of kidnapping his girlfriend in 1995

By Christian V. Esguerra

AFTER spending six years in jail, a young man was ordered released after he was cleared of forcible abduction charges filed against him by his girlfriend in Malabon in 1995.

Judge Benjamin Aquino of Malabon Regional Trial Court Branch 73 found no sufficient grounds to convict Darwin Blas, who was a student of 18 when he was jailed six years ago.

Blas was accused of abducting his girlfriend on Aug. 12, 1995. The alleged victim was 16 then.

The young man allegedly forced his girlfriend to come with him to his house on Rizal Avenue Extension in Barangay Tonsuya, Malabon.

Prosecution evidence showed that Blas was Jallorina's boyfriend and the two had sex in the young man's house in July 1995.

A misunderstanding led to their breakup, court records showed.

For still unclear reasons, Jallorina claimed that Blas abducted him weeks after they had sex.

But after Blas denied the accusation in his testimony, the girls did not show up in court anymore.

Tourism uses web site to show 'real picture'

TOURISM Secretary Richard J. Gordon last week ordered the posting of travel and situational advisories on the Department of Tourism's web site especially during incidents like the hostage-taking in Palawan.

"The DOT web site is one of primary tools of information we need to bring up to speed," Gordon said.

He said Internet advisories are crucial in giving travel operators and tourism agencies the real picture of what is happening.

"Sometimes what you get from foreign media entities is a distorted picture, or just fragments of the big picture," he said. "That inflicts a lot of damage on our efforts to sell the Philippines as a tourist destination."

The Palawan incident is a case in point, Gordon said.

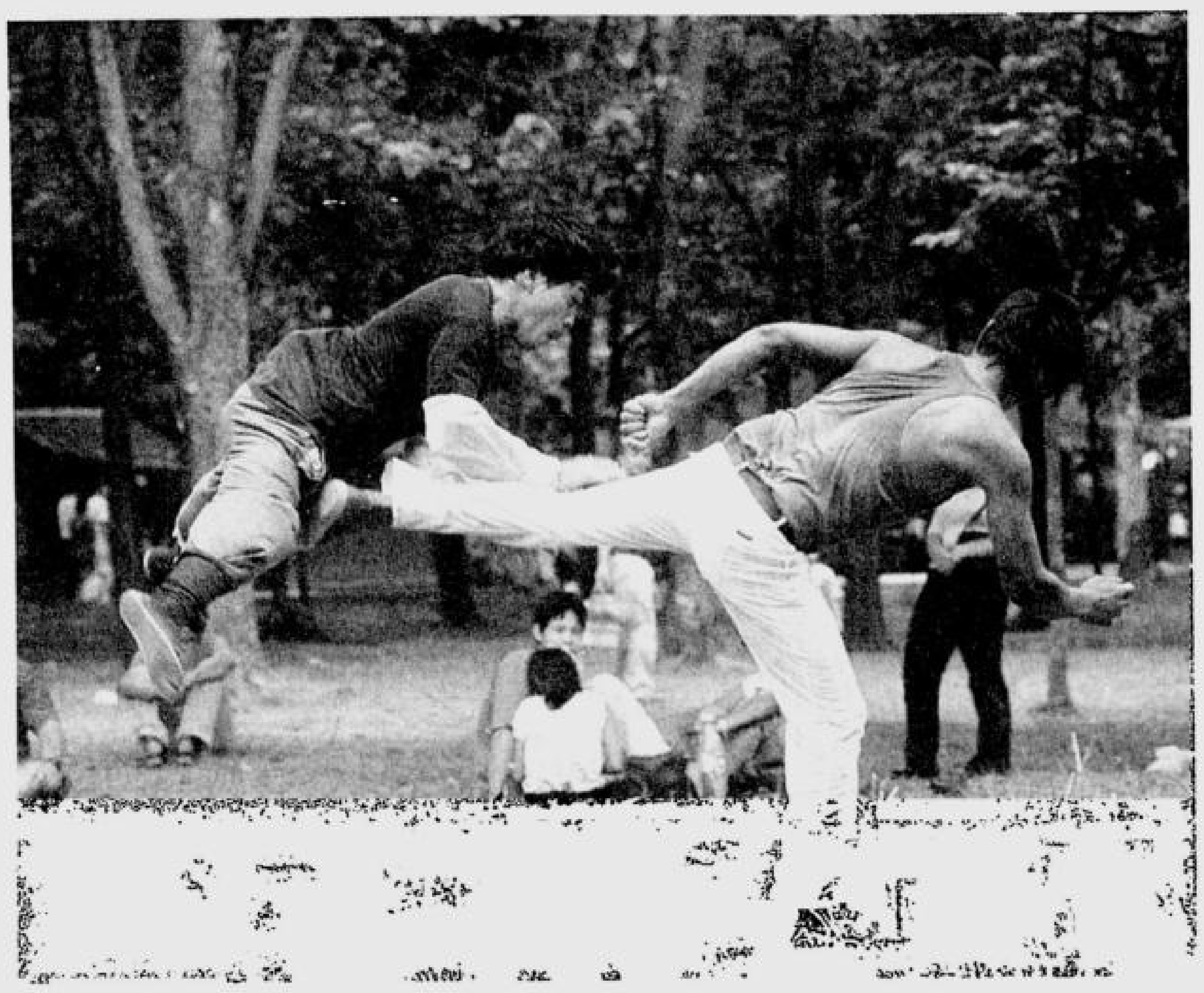
"I was hard put explaining to travel agencies that it was an isolated case, that other resorts around the country were secure and peaceful, that many of the foreign guests at the Palawan resort (Dos Palmas) felt safe enough to continue their vacation there," he said.

The same was true during the Edsa III and May Day riots, he said. "The impression abroad was that Metro Manila was one big battle zone, when the disturbances were limited to the Malacañang area and the Edsa Shrine," he said.

He said the DOT web site must be improved to include up-to-the-minute advisories covering such incidents.

"It's time we make full use of the Internet's reach to let everyone know what's really going on in the Philippines," he said.

The Internet is a worldwide web of more than 30 million interconnected computers.



FREE SHOW

Weekend strollers at the Quezon Memorial Circle park in Quezon City watch movie stunt men practicing their routines.

EDWIN BACASMAS

7 nabbed for UCPB attack

(From page A25)

their safehouses in Las Piñas, Muntinlupa, Carmona in Cavite and San Pedro in Laguna beginning Monday afternoon, Jaraza said.

The suspects yielded four M-16 rifles, an M-14 rifle, an SPAS-12 shotgun, an MP-5 sub-machinegun, and a .30-caliber US carbine, as well as six rifle grenades, four hand grenades, three smoke grenades, and several magazines," the raiders said. The firearms were shown to media people in Camp Crame yesterday.

An Anfra utility vehicle (TAK-814), bonnets, gloves and military and security guard uniforms that the suspects allegedly used in robberies were also confiscated.

Jaraza said that with the seizure of the firearms, police virtually depleted the gang's armory which "would make it difficult for other members to organize another robbery."

The arrest of suspected gang leader George Gomez, who is Kenn's father and Robles' live-in partner, was expected yesterday, Jaraza said.

He said that the gang had robbed Equitable-PCI bank on Congressional Avenue, Bank of Philippine Islands on Timog Avenue, and Real Bank on West Avenue, all in Quezon City.

The suspects are facing multiple criminal charges before the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office, he said.

The gang was supposed to rob another Quezon City bank after UCPB, Jaraza said.

Investigators said that on Monday afternoon, three vehicles trailed a UCPB armored van from the bank's main office in Makati to the branch at the corner of Roosevelt and Quezon avenues in Quezon City

Witnesses said the suspects in the three vehicles, who were all wearing bonnets, fired at the armored van. The bank's security guards returned fire with their shotguns and were able to drive away the attackers after about three minutes of intense fighting, police said.

During the gunfight, security Simplicio Velaya took a bullet in the head, police said.

Among the injured were two other guards, Pepito Sepcon and Warlito Gumogda, police said.

The bank's other security guards said two of the robbers were also hit during the gunfight.

The robbers withdrew without having taken any money and drove in the direction of Manila, witnesses said.

Police later found one of the getaway vehicles—a gray Mitsubishi L-300 van (PYV 338)—abandoned on Maria Clara Street in Barangay Sto. Domingo, also in Quezon City. *With a report from Dave M. Veridiano*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, June 6, 2001
9th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Tb 3:1-11, 16-17
Gospel: Mk 12:18-27

The Sadducees came to Jesus. Since they claim that there is no resurrection, they questioned him in this way, "Master, in the Scriptures Moses gave us this law: 'If anyone dies and leaves a wife but no children, his brother must take the wife and give her a child who will be considered the child of his deceased brother.' Now, there were seven brothers. The first married a wife, but he died without leaving any children. The second took the wife and he, too, died leaving no children. The same thing happened to the third. Finally the seven died leaving no children. Last of all the woman died. Now, in the resurrection, to which of them will she be wife? For the seven had her as wife."

Jesus replied, "You could be wrong in this regard because you understand neither the Scriptures nor the power of God. When they rise from the dead, men and women do not marry but are like the angels in heaven.

Now, about the resurrection of the dead, have you never reflected on the chapter of the burning bush in the book of Moses? God said to him: *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.* Now, he is the God, not of the dead but of the living. You are totally wrong."

Commentary:

True enough, there have been a lot of people in the course of history who wasted much of their time doing foolish things. Religion has become a favorite concern by many of them. They got embroiled in complicated discourses that resulted to nothing. Some of them even argued about the sex of the angels! Jesus' reply to those who wanted to involve him in these worthless and complex issues is very clear: "The God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob is not a God of the dead but of the living." Questions involving people's daily living are Jesus' concerns. He has no time to waste.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (SPECIAL PROCEEDINGS)—Jurisdiction of the probate court—The jurisdiction of the probate court merely relates to matters having to do with the settlement of the estate and the probate Of wills of deceased persons, and the appointment and removal of administrators, executors, guardians and trustees. The question of ownership is as a rule, an extraneous matter which the Probate Court cannot resolve with finality. Thus, for the purpose of determining whether a certain property should or should not be included in the inventory of estate proceeding, the probate court may pass upon the title thereto, but such determination is provisional, not conclusive, and is subject to the final decision in a separate action to resolve title. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Gonzaga-Reyes, Third Division, In the Matter of the Intestate Estate of Deceased Ismael Reyes, Heirs of Oscar Reyes v. Reyes, G.R. No. 139587, November 22, 2000].

Digest by R.B. Vera

SPD chief warns Taguig groups

SOUTHERN Police District Office Director Supt. Jose Gutierrez yesterday warned members of the warring political groups in Taguig to stop the violence or the police will deal with them "decisively."

Gutierrez issued the warning after hundreds of supporters of incumbent town Mayor Ricardo Papa used garbage trucks to barricade the streets leading to the town hall Monday night when they learned that local Commission on Elections officials planned to transport the election returns to the Philippine International Convention Center. Papa's supporters suspect that a winner would be illegally proclaimed at the PICC.

Gutierrez said the barricades raised the tension in the coastal town's already explosive political atmosphere.

The SPDO chief said he would throw the book at the supporters of Papa or of Freddie Tinga if they were caught engaging in violent acts.

He said the Taguig police force's paramount concern is to maintain peace and order in the town.

Political tension in Taguig rose when the Comelec failed to proclaim the winner of the mayoral elections. This prompted Gutierrez to deploy additional policemen to the town.

Gutierrez blamed the failure of elections on lawyers of Papa and Tinga who lodged protests against each other.

The SPDO chief hoped to resolve soon the political crisis gripping the town of Taguig. He said the police would respect and follow whomever the Comelec declares as town mayor.

The Papa and Tinga camps have swapped charges of cheating and election fraud since May 14.

Unconfirmed reports said Tinga is ahead of Papa and is likely to succeed him. *Nelson F. Flores*

Parañaque thief falls

POLICE on Monday arrested a suspected robber after a massive hunt in Parañaque City.

Vicente Layson, 33, of Ilang-Ilang Street, Clinic Site, in Barangay BF, Parañaque City, did not resist arrest when policemen led by Senior Insp. Rodolfo Bahia Jr. came to his house to apprehend him.

Police said Layson was responsible for several robberies in Parañaque, the latest of which was the holdup of Russel Medina on May 29.

Supt. Ronald Estilles, Parañaque police station commander, said Medina was driving on his way home when his van was caught in traffic and stopped at the corner of Lopez and A. Santos avenues about 12 noon on Monday.

Police said Layson approached Medina, poked a gun at him, and ordered him to open the window of the van. When Medina refused, Layson allegedly shot him in the arm, police said.

Layson then took Medina' wallet, which contained P1,000, police said.

Layson escaped with the help of a man on a motorcycle who fetched him from the scene.

Layson is now detained at the Parañaque City police headquarters jail. He refused to give any statement.

Supt. Estilles said charges of robbery and frustrated homicide were being prepared against Layson.

Police said the man who helped Layson escape is still at large. *Nelson F. Flores*

Malonzo . . .

(From page A25)

asked the Comelec to imprison Malonzo, Erice and Cunanan for six months and to fine them P1,000 each.

Malonzo had declared his victory even before the Comelec could finish the canvassing of votes.

He was said to have put up streamers announcing his victory and loudspeakers in front of City Hall that repeatedly played his campaign jingle.

Asistio said Malonzo's self-proclamation was an act of "utter disrespect and pure mockery with undisguised impunity" of the Comelec order, which suspended the proclamation pending the poll body's decision on a petition filed by Asistio.

The congressman had asked the Comelec to declare a failure of election in Caloocan. He cited allegedly massive disenfranchisement of voters on election day.

Asistio and his camp earlier filed charges against Malonzo and other local officials for allegedly orchestrating the disruption of the elections in Caloocan.

Malonzo was accused of delaying the distribution of election materials.

City treasurer Lourdes Jose was implicated in the charges.

But Malonzo had said that teachers, headed by Dr. Elizabeth Manalo, should be blamed for the delay.

'HEROES HONORED'

Philippine Tourism Authority general manager Nixon Kua commends PTA employees Camilo Supsup and Carlos Frias for helping save the life of 9-year-old Nelson Gunay who nearly drowned in a public beach in Batangas City recently. Kua said the two men's heroism is "a testament to the service-oriented mindset of tourism employees." He said the incident is also proof "that the people in the tourism department can be relied on during emergencies."

Rehab center inmates caught in the act of robbing driver

By Agnes Donato

POLICE yesterday arrested two suspected robbers while they were in the act of robbing their 11th taxi driver victim in four days.

Jonas Orosco, 28, of Barangay Malinao, Pasig City and Jun Abad, 22, of De Las Alas Subdivision, Barangay Tramo, Pasay City, were arrested just as they were about to rob their 11th victim in a dark portion of New Society Street in Barangay Sta. Lucia about 4 a.m. yesterday.

A Pasig police unit led by Insp. Rodante Arcigal chanced upon the suspects just as they were about to take the P580 of taxi driver Gaudioso Riosa.

Police said Riosa, 61, of Sta. Ana, Manila, picked up Orosco and Abad on Shaw Boulevard and proceeded to drive them to their supposed destination at the De Castro Subdivision in Pasig.

But when they reached New Society Street, the two men allegedly took out their screwdrivers, pointed at the driver's neck and announced the holdup.

Arcigal said they were still investigating how the suspects were able to conduct the robberies when they were supposed to be detained at the Metro Manila Drug Rehabilitation Center in Taguig.

It was learned that Orosco is supposed to be in the custody of a certain Lawrence Valdez, a jail guard, whom the suspect said was his probationary officer.

During interrogation, the two men reportedly owned up to at least 10 other taxi robberies in Pasig City.

Supt. John Sosito, Pasig City police chief, said another victim, taxi driver Alejandro Santos, 43, of San Juan, Metro Manila, showed up yesterday and also tagged the two men as the ones who robbed him of P14,700 on May 27.

Messenger arrested for stealing from firm

MANDALUYONG police yesterday arrested an office messenger accused of robbing the Makati City realty firm where he works of P345,000 in cash and checks.

Police recovered from suspect Jojo Gorospe, 23, of Masaeto Development Corp. about P90,000 in cash and P145,000 in checks which were said to be part of the amount he had stolen on June 1, according to Insp. Efren Jugo, Mandaluyong Police Criminal Investigation Division chief.

Jugo said the arrest was made with the help of members of the National Bureau of Investigation led by agent Rodrigo Mapoy.

Mapoy told Mandaluyong police that Gorospe managed to take two checks for P200,000 and P145,000 from the firm last month.

Investigation showed that Gorospe was able to encash the check for P200,000 on June 1 but did not cash the one for P145,000 at the PS Bank branch on Ayala Avenue in Makati City.

Police said Masaeto Development Corp. was not able to instruct the bank earlier to disallow any transaction to be made by Gorospe, as the firm learned belatedly that he had been able to cash one of the checks.

Gorospe was arrested in Barangay Pag-asa in Mandaluyong City at 12:20 a.m. yesterday. Police said they found on him P91,000 in cash and a check for P145,000.

Theft charges are being prepared against Gorospe who was brought to the NBI headquarters in Manila for detention. *Agnes Donato*

Maid accused of theft

POLICE on Monday arrested a 28-year-old housemaid after she allegedly stole more than P200,000 worth of personal belongings from her employer in Parañaque City.

A team of Parañaque policemen arrested Marilou Henotiva at her home in Galas, Quezon City, while she was allegedly about to escape. She did not resist arrest.

Upon her arrest, Henotiva admitted committing the crime but pleaded for mercy. She said she stole from her employer because her father, who is in Samar province, is very sick.

Investigation showed that the maid entered the master bedroom of her employer on London Street in Merville Park at around 4 p.m. Monday, took her employer's personal belongings like jewelry and cellular phones and fled.

The employer, Jocelyn Ponce, was fast asleep during the alleged theft, police said.

SPO4 Glenn Tigson, Parañaque police investigator, said Ponce, upon learning of the loss of her personal effects and the absence of the housemaid, immediately went to the employment agency where she had hired the maid five months earlier. Ponce then reported the alleged theft and the disappearance of the maid to police.

SPO4 Tigson said his colleagues immediately went to work and tracked down the housemaid in her house in Quezon City. *Nelson F. Flores*

Stampede triggers probe

METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority Chair Benjamin Abalos has asked Philippine National Police Director General Leandro Mendoza to review the training program of security guards to make them more responsive to crisis situations.

Abalos made the request after he learned how SM City security guards not only failed to control the stampeding crowd late Sunday afternoon but even joined them in running aimlessly inside the sprawling but jampacked mall.

Abalos said security guards must maintain peace and order inside malls at all times. Their responsibility to the public is so great that they must be well-equipped and trained to deal with any contingency like what happened at SM City in North EDSA, Quezon City, he said.

"Because people depend on them, the guard should be controlling the trouble, not adding to it," Abalos said in Filipino.

The stampede started about 6 p.m. when a prankster reportedly set off a fire alarm in the mall's Food Court.

Mall security personnel failed to get the culprit who turned on the alarm.

Hundreds of people, most of whom were women and children shopping for school supplies, were hurt in the stampede, witnesses said. *Nelson F. Flores*

BJMP: Clean all jails

THE BUREAU of Jail Management and Penology officer in charge, Chief Supt. Arturo W. Alit, last week ordered a clean-up of all municipal and city jails under the supervision of the bureau to promote sanitation and to prevent the outbreak of diseases usually associated with jail congestion.

Alit issued the order during a consultative meeting with the bureau's assistant regional directors at the bureau's main office in Quezon City.

He said the jail clean-up was urgently needed especially in Metro Manila. He said sanitation would help prevent the outbreak of diseases, especially during the rainy season.

There are 1,253 jails under the supervision of BJMP.

Alit also urged officials to improve jail facilities. He said improving the living conditions of prisoners is an antidote to jail disturbances.

He also instructed the assistant regional directors to organize regional food councils that will be responsible for the preparation of regular menus for prisoners.

He said jail wardens would be responsible for feeding inmates with the daily budget allotted for them by law.

Alit clarified that a regular menu cannot be made nationwide and will have to vary in every region based on the availability of food items.

Any deviation from the regular menu to the disadvantage of inmates will be easily detected because government and non-government organizations are encouraged to monitor the activities in jails nationwide and to report their findings to BJMP leadership, Alit explained.

Homecoming

THE ATENEO de Manila College of Law will mark its 65th anniversary with an alumni homecoming sponsored by the Ateneo Law Alumni Foundation Inc. and Host Class '77 on Friday.

Foundation president Rolando F. del Castillo said the homecoming will start at 6:30 p.m. at the new Law School Building at Rockwell in Makati.

Attire will be "smart casual."

The homecoming will honor Class '41, the diamond jubilarians, who include Manuel and Patricio Pineda; Class '51, the golden jubilarians, who include William Veto and Joaquin Misa; Class '61, the ruby jubilarians, who include Justice Secretary Hernando T. Perez, former finance undersecretary Ruben Fruto, former Commission on Elections Commissioner Regalado Maambong, Ambassador Jaime Bautista and Eloy Bello III, Camilo Sabio and Wilfrido E. Sanchez; and the silver jubilarians who include Dean Cynthia Roxas-del Castillo, Mayor Agnes Torres-Devanadera, Bienvenido Medrano Jr., Raymundo Francisco, Ricardo Flores and Judges Mariano del Castillo, Stella Perlas-Bernabe, Bayani Vargas and Victoria Fernandez.

Also to be honored during the homecoming will be the new lawyers from Class 2000 who recently passed the bar, led by class valedictorian and bar topnotcher Andrea Sese-Relucio.

FUN RUN
While onlookers cheer and shriek and guffaw, boys bare as the day they were born join a race during a recent feast day celebration in Krus na Ligas in Quezon City.
EDWIN BACASMAS

Tondo cook kills self

By Alcuin Papa and Margarette Teodosio

HE made a living serving up dishes that delighted diners but he was himself apparently depressed over his financial problems. Police said these problems drove a 55-year-old cook to commit suicide in Tondo, Manila on Monday.

Agents of the Western Police District homicide section identified the victim as Mariano Chua, married and a live-in cook of Sanchez Catering on Sanchez Extension in Tondo, Manila.

Chua's body was discovered at 8:50 a.m. Monday in the comfort room of the office of the catering firm. A few minutes before that, witnesses said Chua entered the comfort room, after which a gunshot was heard.

Investigators recovered a homemade .38 caliber revolver or "paltik" which the victim allegedly used to take his own life. Chua was rushed to the Metropolitan Hospital but died while undergoing treatment at 10:15 a.m.

Chua's son Michael said his father had been depressed the past few weeks due to financial problems. Chua had incurred gambling debts from cockfighting, he said.

Michael added that his father said he wanted to kill himself two weeks ago

In another part of Manila, a stevedore discovered the floating body of a dead man yesterday.

Jose Sucdana, 23, of Binondo, Manila, found the body of a still unidentified man while he was on board a barge. The body was floating in the Pasig River behind the Bureau of Immigration building along Muelle del Rio in Intramuros at 8 a.m. yesterday, police said.

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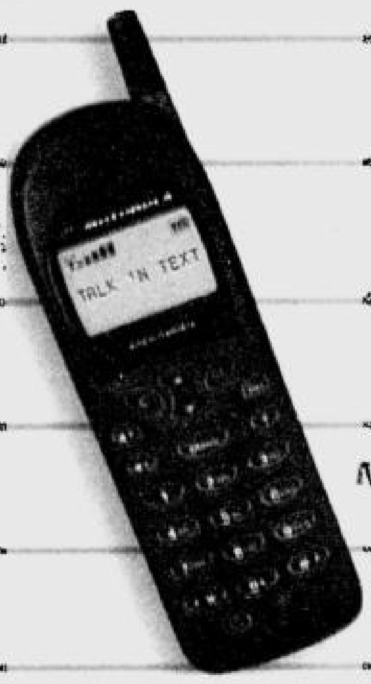

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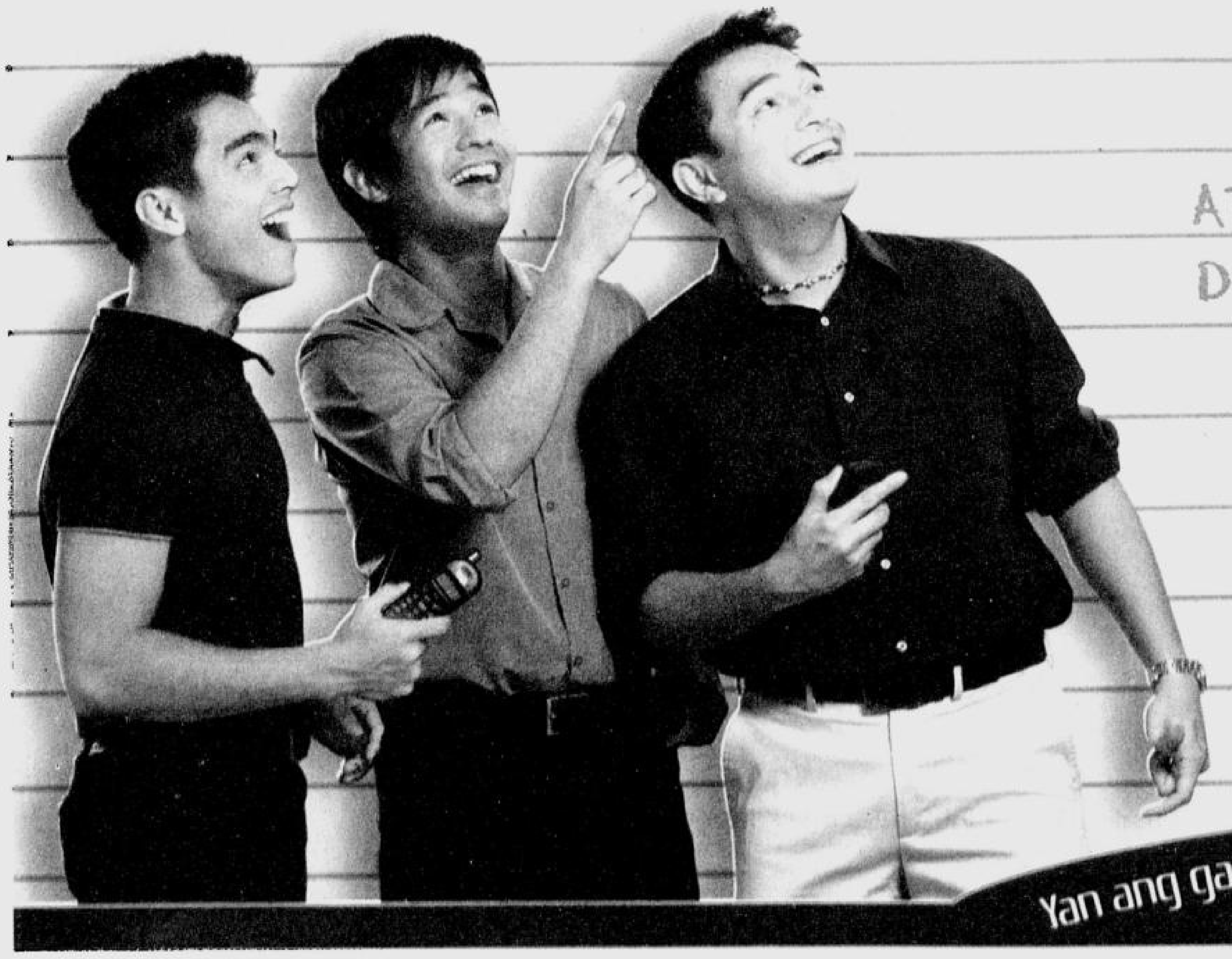

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Wowie back in Judy Ann's arms

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

WOWIE de Guzman was out of show biz for quite some time following a rift with his former manager **Dolor Guevarra** and a few other controversies.

After a year, Wowie is back.

As part of a love team with **Judy Ann Santos**, Wowie gained a large following all over the country. Thousands of fans were saddened when the Wowie-Judy Ann tandem broke up after a succession of screen blockbusters and TV series.

Wowie has been Judy Ann's most successful leading man. After they first teamed up in the low-budget drama "Sana Naman," Judy Ann and Wowie did one big box-office success after another—"Mara Clara, The Movie," "Kung Alam Mo Lang," "Paano ang Puso Ko," "Muling Ibalik ang Tamis ng Pag-ibig," "Esperanza," "Kasal-Kasalan" and "Dito sa Puso Ko."

They are reunited in "Luv Text," a teen romance flick which also marks the directorial return of **Rowell Santiago**.

"At first, I thought they were joking about the project," Wowie shares. "I knew it would take a long time before I could do a movie with Judy Ann after all that happened. I was happy to work with Judy Ann again."

Their first shooting day was initially annoying, since they hadn't worked with each other for more than a year.

"We couldn't even talk because we didn't feel at ease," Wowie says. "But when we started talking, the ice was broken. It's still fun to work with somebody who is as professional as Judy Ann."

The movie is the first project of Maverick Films, said to be the resurrected Millennium Cinema, owned by former presidential son **Jinggoy Ejercito**.

Rowell returns to the director's chair after six years. His previous project was the **Aga Muhlach-Mikee Cojuangco** starrer, "Forever."

Where is Kim?

AFTER winning a third term in the May 14 elections, Manila Councilor **Kim Atienza** is said to have gone on vacation.

Kim may be taking a much-needed rest after the hectic and grueling campaign. His staff, however, is mum about his whereabouts. They said they really don't know where Kim hied off to, or with whom.

REUNITED. Wowie de Guzman and Judy Ann Santos are together again in "Luv Text."

Could he be with another show biz figure? Kim has been linked with several show biz personalities.

The son of Manila Mayor **Lito Atienza**, who is himself a reelectionist, is said to be in Hong Kong, Boracay or Hawaii.

Back to acting

"NEVER again!"

This is what former chief censor and also-ran Makati congressional candidate **Armida Siguion-Reyna** said of her political bid.

After failing to win a congressional seat in Makati, *Tita* Midz vowed she would never get involved in politics again.

"Politicians who say that show biz is dirty have no right to say it," Tita Midz says. "Politics is dirtier."

Tita Midz is returning to acting, starring in ABS-CBN's upcoming teleseries, "Sa Puso Ko, Iingatan Ka," which has the love team of **Judy Ann Santos** and **Piolo Pascual** plus a powerhouse cast.

Tita Midz's character makes life miserable for Judy Ann's character. "I'm wicked, holier-than-thou," she says of her character.

The 70-year-old actress, producer and host of TV's long-running musical program, "Aawitan Kita," says she missed acting.

"The last job I did was not an acting job," Tita Midz says, referring to the censor's post. "The last time I acted in front of the cameras was in 1996, when I did 'Inagaw Mo ang Lahat sa Akin.'"

Tita Midz is joined by a host of talented performers in the new tele-series, including **Caridad Sanchez, Cherry Pie Picache, Pen Medina, Zsa Zsa Padilla, Coney Reyes** and **Alma Concepcion.** The series also introduces Coney's eldest son, **LA Mumar. Jose Javier Reyes** is directing.

"Sa Puso Ko, Iingatan Ka" premieres June 11, Monday, 8 p.m. It is the latest addition to ABS-CBN's "Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan" and "Pangako sa 'Yo."

Charlene 'adopted'

OVER the weekend, the Vera-Perez family hosted lunch to welcome the newest addition to their clan, actor **Aga Muhlach**, who recently married Charlene Gonzales in a grand ceremony in Baguio City.

Although Charlene is not really born to the Vera-Perez family, she was "adopted" by the prominent clan and welcomed with open arms when her mom, former beauty queen **Elvie Gonzales**, married **Pepito Vera-Perez**.

Tony crowns 'offensive' but widely ...

(From page A32)

others who vote for the Tony Awards, gave Lane the nod. Lane, in accepting the award, said he wanted to share it with Broderick.

"We are very much a team, and believe me, without him, I am nothing," Lane said.

The show within a show has been described as an equal opportunity offender, where the Jews are so greedy they make merchandise out of Hitler, gay men are portrayed as limp-wristed and lispy and sexually-depraved old women struggle with walkers to a sexual fling.

In a bid to boost TV ratings for the 55th annual Tony Awards, the American Theatre Wing, which bestows Broadway's highest honors, asked crowd pleasers Lane and Broderick to host the live broadcast on PBS and CBS TV.

Such was the domination of "The Producers"—it had received 15 nominations and millions appear to be prepared to pay the $100 ticket price to see it—that even "Proof" director Daniel Sullivan referred to it in his acceptance speech.

"There must be some mistake, I had nothing to do with 'The Producers,'" Sullivan told the audience. There was no mistake and "Proof" added to its honors with Mary-Louise Parker winning the Tony for the best performance by a leading actress in a play. It also won best play, written by David Auburn, who earlier this year won a Pulitzer Prize for the same work.

The play, "The Invention of Love" by Tom Stoppard, won two Tonys. Best performance by a leading actor went to Richard Easton and the best performance by a featured actor to Robert Sean Leonard.

The revival of the musical "42nd Street" won two Tony Awards; one for the best revival of a musical and the other for the best performance by a leading actress in a musical to Christine Ebersole.

Best performance by a featured actress in a play was awarded to Viola Davis from "King Hedley II," by the renowned playwright August Wilson, who explores black American experiences in his works.

"The Producers" trophies included best musical, best book of a musical (Mel Brooks and Thomas Meehan), best original score—music and lyrics—written for the Theater (Brooks), best direction of a musical (Susan Stroman), best performance by a leading actor in a musical (Nathan Lane), best scenic design (Robin Wagner), best costume design (William Ivey Long), best lighting design (Peter Kaczorowski), best choreography (Susan Stroman), best orchestrations (Doug Besterman), best performance by a featured actor in a Musical (Gary Beach) and best performance by a featured actress in a musical (Cady Huffman).

Reuters

Tribute to Bernal

CINEMA One pays tribute to the late film director Ishmael Bernal by showing the classic movies of the late megman on all Wednesday nights of June, 8 p.m.

To be aired tonight is "Nunal sa Tubig."

June 13 features "Relasyon."

"City After Dark" airs June 20, while "Himala" will be shown June 27.

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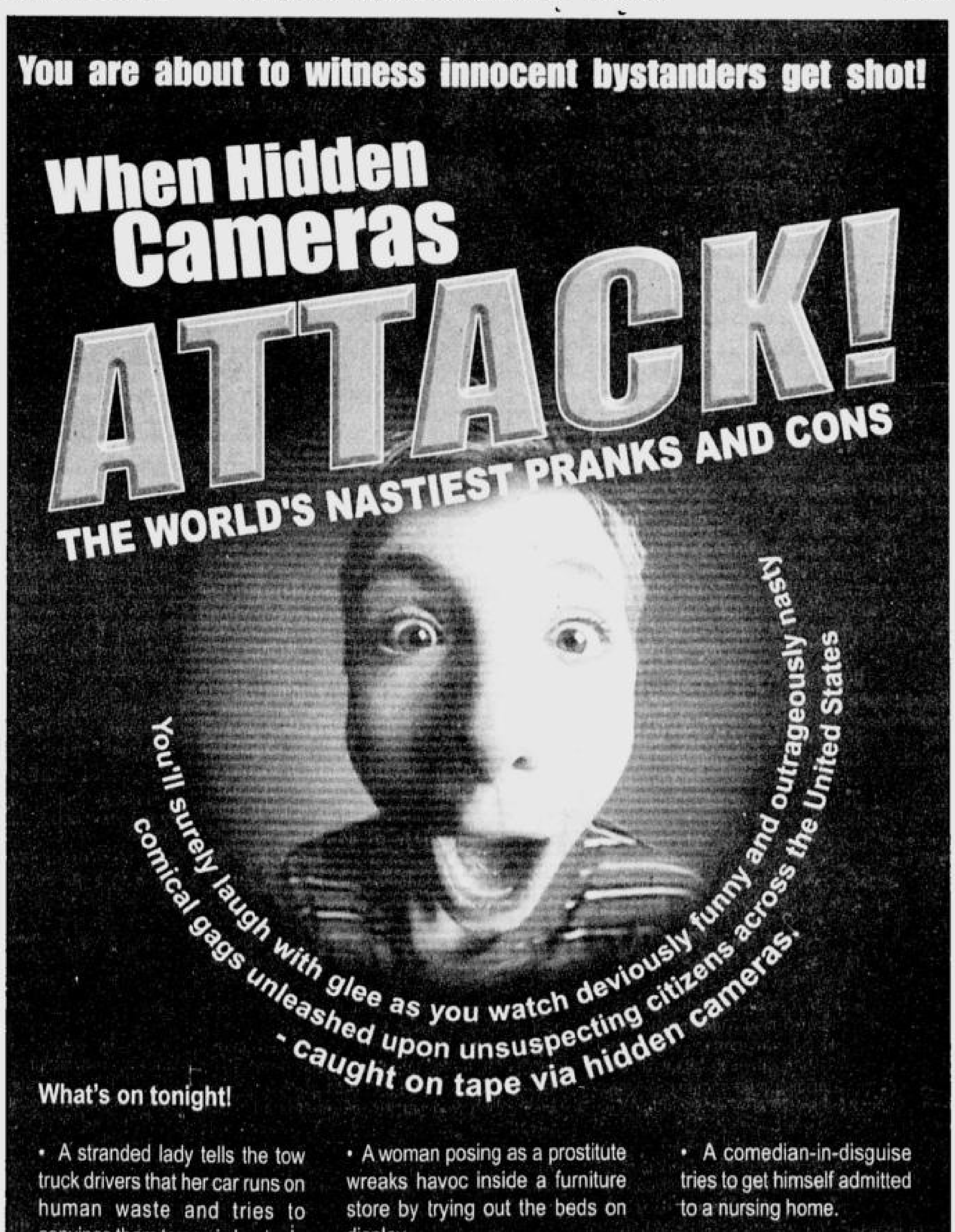

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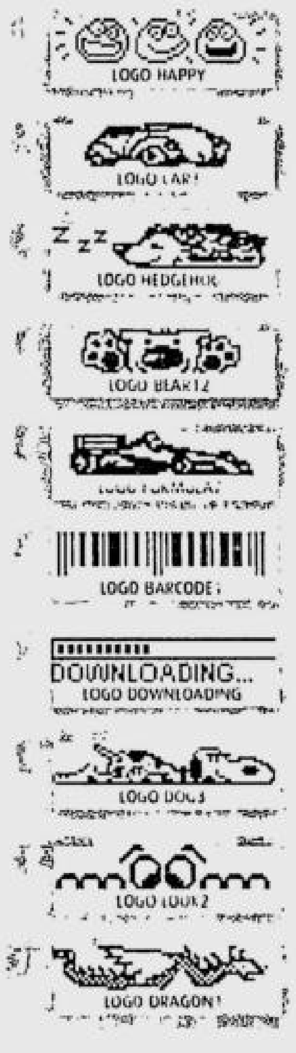

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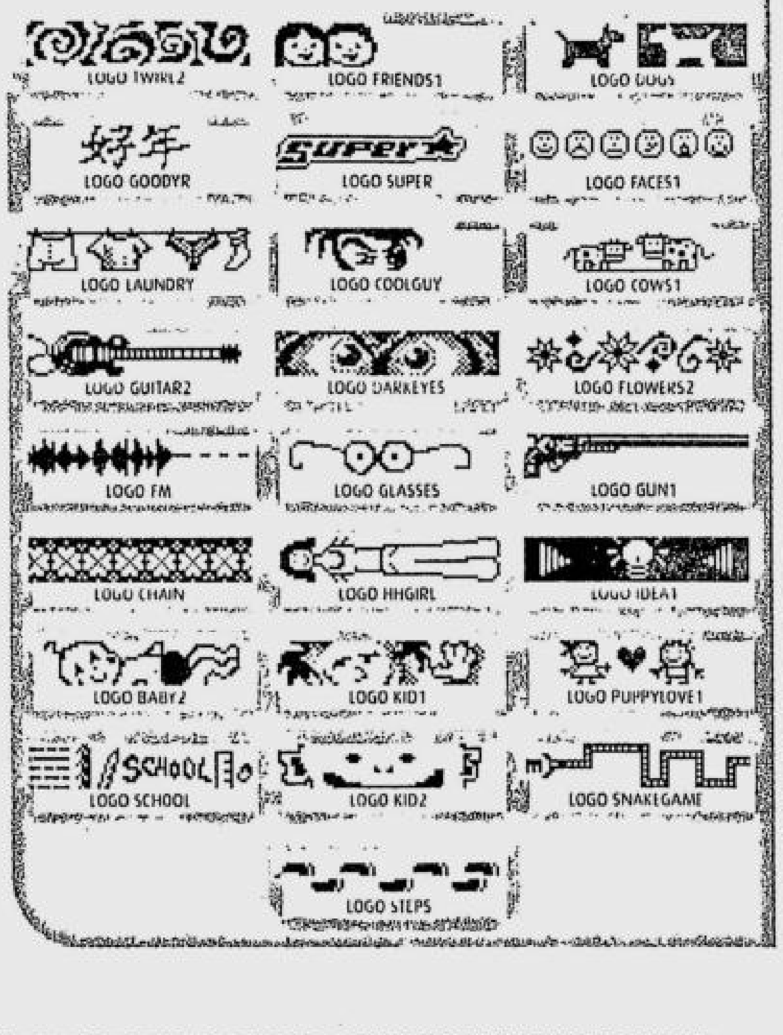

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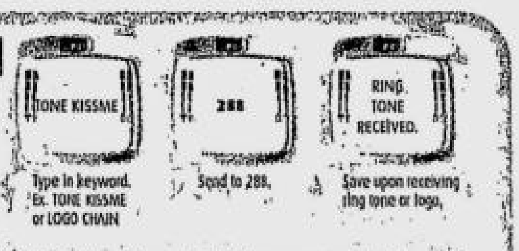

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10	DOLBY SURROUND	ANTS IN THE PANTS
11	DOLBY SURROUND	CARTA ALAS
12	DOLBY SURROUND	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL

SM CITY MANILA 5239240

1	DOLBY DIGITAL	PEARL HARBOR
2	DOLBY DIGITAL	ANTS IN THE PANTS
3	DOLBY SURROUND	ANGEL EYES
4	DOLBY SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
5	DOLBY DIGITAL	TRAFFIC
6	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	PEARL HARBOR
7	DOLBY SURROUND	CUT- AWAY
8	DOLBY SURROUND	CARTA ALAS
9	DOLBY SURROUND	PEARL HARBOR
10	DOLBY SURROUND	SOMEONE LIKE YOU
11	DOLBY SURROUND	ALAS DOSE
12	DOLBY SURROUND	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL

GUADALUPE COMM'L CTR 8820950

1	ULTRA SURROUND	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	PEARL HARBOR
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CARTA ALAS

SM MEGAMALL 6331901 • 6329401

1	DOLBY DIGITAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
2	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
3	DOLBY DIGITAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
4	DTS	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
5	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
6	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
7	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	ANTS IN THE PANTS
8	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	ANGEL EYES
9	DOLBY SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
10	DOLBY SURROUND	PEARL HARBOR
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	PEARL HARBOR
12	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	ALAS DOSE

SM CITY NORTH EDSA 9295452

1	DOLBY SURROUND	ANGEL EYES
2	DOLBY SURROUND	PEARL HARBOR
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	LABRADOR
4	DOLBY SURROUND	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
5	DOLBY SURROUND	ANTS IN THE PANTS
6	DOLBY SURROUND	PEARL HARBOR
7	DTS	THE MUMMY RETURNS
8	DOLBY DIGITAL	PEARL HARBOR
9	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TRAFFIC
10	DOLBY SURROUND	ALAS DOSE
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	CUT- AWAY
12	DOLBY SURROUND	CARTA ALAS

SM SOUTHMALL 8066888 • 8060782

1	ULTRA SURROUND	ANGEL EYES
2	ULTRA SURROUND	ANTS IN THE PANTS
3	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	THE MUMMY RETURNS
4	ULTRA SURROUND	PEARL HARBOR
5	ULTRA SURROUND	TRAFFIC
6	ULTRA SURROUND	CARTA ALAS
7	ULTRA SURROUND	ALAS DOSE
8	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	PEARL HARBOR
9	ULTRA SURROUND	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
10	ULTRA SURROUND	LABRADOR

TUTUBAN CENTER 2514302

1	ULTRA SURROUND	PEARL HARBOR
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	ALAS DOSE
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL

SM CEBU 2313876

1	DOLBY SURROUND	PEARL HARBOR
2	ULTRA SURROUND	TRAFFIC
3	ULTRA SURROUND	CUT- AWAY
4	ULTRA SURROUND	PEARL HARBOR
5	ULTRA SURROUND	DEMON GATI
6	ULTRA SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
7	DOLBY SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS

SM ILOILO 3209422

1	ULTRA SURROUND	THE POSSESSED
2	ULTRA SURROUND	CLOSED
3	ULTRA SURROUND	TRAFFIC
4	ULTRA SURROUND	15 MINUTES
5	ULTRA SURROUND	ALAS DOSE
6	ULTRA SURROUND	THE MUMMY RETURNS
7	ULTRA SURROUND	CLOSED
8	ULTRA SURROUND	SOMEONE LIKE YOU

SM PAMPANGA 7128015

1	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	PEARL HARBOR
2	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	THE MUMMY RETURNS
3	DOLBY SURROUND	ANGEL EYES
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	ALAS DOSE
5	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	TRAFFIC
6	DOLBY SURROUND	PEARL HARBOR

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2 THE MUMMY RETURNS	2 PEARL HARBOR In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND	6 PEARL HARBOR In DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND	2 PEARL HARBOR In SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND	2 PEARL HARBOR In DSD DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3 PEARL HARBOR	3 PEARL HARBOR THX In DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND	7 TRAFFIC In DTS DIGITAL SOUND	3 THE MUMMY RETURNS In DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND	3 THE MUMMY RETURNS In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
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Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
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2 (SDDS) PEARL HARBOR
3 (DTS) THE MUMMY RETURNS
4 GOLD (DTS) THE MUMMY RETURNS
5 GOLD (DOLBY) PEARL HARBOR
6 GOLD (SDDS) ANTS IN THE PANTS
7 GOLD (DOLBY) PEARL HARBOR
8 [illegible] ANGEL EYES
9 [illegible] THE POSSESSED
10 [illegible] HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel 853 4486
1
2
3 (DTS) PEARL HARBOR
4
5
6 (DTS)
Golden Pearl THX

Masagana CINEMAX 1-2 & 3
(Kalaw) tel 536.4315
1 (DOLBY) RESERVE
2 (DTS) PEARL HARBOR
3

Masagana CINEMA GOLD
(Pasay) tel 831 6603
1 LABRADOR
2 PEARL HARBOR
3

starmall Movies
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986
1 THE MUMMY RETURNS
2
3 LABRADOR
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) PEARL HARBOR
5 ANTS IN THE PANTS

Metropolis
(Alabang) tel 543 4001
1 RESERVE
2 RESERVE
3 ALAS DOSE
4
5 CARTA ALAS
6 PEARL HARBOR
7 LABRADOR
8 THE MUMMY RETURNS

LOUIE'S CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 751.2010 / 892.3349
1 PEARL HARBOR

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 THE MUMMY RETURNS
2 SOMEONE LIKE YOU

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC
tel 930.9515
1
2
3 PEARL HARBOR

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864
1
A PEARL HARBOR

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376
1 PEARL HARBOR
2
3 THE MUMMY RETURNS
4 ALAS DOSE

GOTESCO CINEMA

City
(Manila) tel 734.8588
1 (DOLBY) PEARL HARBOR
2 ALAS DOSE
3 ANGEL EYES
4 ANTS IN THE PANTS
5
6 LABRADOR
7 (DTS) THE MUMMY RETURNS
8 (SDDS) THE MUMMY RETURNS
9 (DOLBY) PEARL HARBOR

Caloocan
tel 362.3508
2 LABRADOR

Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781
1 ALAS DOSE
2 LABRADOR
3 CARTA ALAS
4 (SDDS) PEARL HARBOR
5
6 (DOLBY) PEARL HARBOR
7 (DTS) THE MUMMY RETURNS
8 RESERVE
9 RESERVE

Commonwealth
tel 951.0083
1 (DTS) THE MUMMY RETURNS
2
3 ALAS DOSE
4 ANTS IN THE PANTS
5 (SDDS) PEARL HARBOR
6 LABRADOR
7 (DOLBY) PEARL HARBOR
8 CARTA ALAS

Ortigas
tel 656.6795
1 PEARL HARBOR
2 THE MUMMY RETURNS
3 (DTS) LABRADOR
4
5 (SDDS) PEARL HARBOR

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470
1 PEARL HARBOR

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888
1 LABRADOR

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724
Dilson
Lords LABRADOR
Jennet

MARKETPLACE Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 LABRADOR
2 PEARL HARBOR
3 ALAS DOSE
4

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215
1
2 ALAS DOSE

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA tel 733.4238
1 (DOLBY) PEARL HARBOR
2 ALAS DOSE
3 THE MUMMY RETURNS
4 LABRADOR
5

New Divisoria Mall CINEMA
tel 244.4619
1 LABRADOR
2 PEARL HARBOR
3 KAMASUTRA
4 ALAS DOSE
5 CARTA ALAS
6

Baclaran LRT CINEMA
tel 512.0115
1 (DOLBY) LABRADOR
2
3 PEARL HARBOR
4
5

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198
1 PEARL HARBOR
2 ALAS DOSE
3 (DTS) THE MUMMY RETURNS

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 ALAS DOSE
2 (DTS) KAMASUTRA
3 (DOLBY) PEARL HARBOR
4 THE MUMMY RETURNS

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) PEARL HARBOR
2
3 ALAS DOSE
4 (DTS) CARTA ALAS

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) PEARL HARBOR
2 ALAS DOSE
3 (DTS) THE MUMMT RETURNS
4 KAMASUTRA
5 TRAFFIC

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883
1 PEARL HARBOR
2 THE MUMMY RETURNS
3 KAMASUTRA

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 536.5101
1 PEARL HARBOR
2 KAMASUTRA
3 TRAFFIC

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311
1 ALAS DOSE
2 THE MUMMY RETURNS
3 CARTA ALAS

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736
1 VALENTINE
2 PEARL HARBOR
3

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808
1 (DTS) PEARL HARBOR
2 (DTS) ALAS DOSE

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385
1 PEARL HARBOR

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657
1 ALAS DOSE
2 PEARL HARBOR
3 THE MUMMY RETURNS

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 KAMASUTRA
2 CARTA ALAS
3 ALAS DOSE
4 THE MUMMY RETURNS

Berma
tel 879.2168
1 PEARL HARBOR
2

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269
1 RESERVE
2 LABRADOR
3
4 PEARL HARBOR

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 [illegible] PEARL HARBOR
2 PEARL HARBOR
3 ALAS DOSE
4 (DTS [illegible]) THE MUMMY RETURNS

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DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101

ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	ALAS DOSE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	CARTA ALAS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	THE MUMMY RETURN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	ANGEL EYES
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	TRAFFIC
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	KAMASUTRA 2001
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	SPY KIDS
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	THE MUMMY RETURN
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	BABAENG PUTIK / MALENA
ODEON	PEARL HARBOR
ODEON-2	ALAS DOSE
ROBEN	CARTA ALAS
TANDEM-1	KUNG LILIGAYA KA
TANDEM-2	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
TIMES	LOST HARD BULLET

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	SA IYONG HAPLOS / EXIT WOUNDS
QUEZON-1	PEARL HARBOR
REMAR	PEARL HARBOR
REMAR-2	ALAS DOSE

CUBAO

OCEAN SUPERAMA	BABAENG PUTIK
OCEAN CINEMA-A	PANABLA
OCEAN CINEMA-B	CRISELDA

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	PEARL HARBOR
CINEMA-2	TRAFFIC - JUNE 6-7 • FRENCH FILM FESTIVAL JUNE 8-18

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-54091 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	HAYOP SA SEX APPEAL
CINEMA-2	CARTA ALAS
CINEMA-3	TRAFFIC
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	PEARL HARBOR
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	PEARL HARBOR
CINEMA-6	LABRADOR
CINEMA-7	SPY KIDS
CINEMA-8	CUT AWAY
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	THE MUMMY RETURNS
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	PEARL HARBOR
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	PEARL HARBOR
CINEMA-12	ANTS IN THE PANTS
CINEMA-14	ANGEL EYES
CINEMA-15	ALAS DOSE

LORES

CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED

POWER PLANT CINEMA

CINEMA-1	TRAFFIC
CINEMA-2	PEARL HARBOR
CINEMA-3	PEARL HARBOR
CINEMA-4	THE MUMMY RETURNS
CINEMA-5	ANGEL EYES
CINEMA-6	PEARL HARBOR

UNIWIDE METROMALL

(LAS PINAS)	
CINEMA-1	BAIT
CINEMA-2	KATAWAN
CINEMA-4	ANG GUSTO KO SA LALAKE

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARANAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	SWEET NOVEMBER
CINEMA-2	MASARAP HABANG MAINIT
CINEMA-4	WANTED G.R.O

Regine sings at Mandarin

LIVING up to its promise of excellent performances from brilliant artists every month, "Crossover Presents" another diva, Asia's Songbird Regine Velasquez.

On June 7, 8 p.m. at Captain's Bar of Mandarin Oriental Manila, Regine joins the prestigious roster of artists who have performed in the monthly concert series.

Discover a Regine in a performance you've never seen or heard before—more mature and classy, full of power yet subdued, soft and moving.

Regine will dish out a repertoire of crossover hits, R&B and contemporary jazz favorites. She will be joined by Gerard Salonga as musical director, and The Opera quartet as back-up.

The concert is presented by Shell-Citibank Mastercard and Sunsilk, with Gentxt from Globe Handyphone, Veterano Brandy, Safeguard Soap, Cafe Puro Jade Blend and Carefree. It is also brought in part by Generation E from Mead Johnson, Cocolife, Canon, Biogesic, No-Drowse Decolgen and Calciumade.

For ticket inquiries, call Captain's Bar at 750-8888 or Ticket World at 891-5610.

Stars join family day

TOP celebrities join the nationwide Lactum family day, which promises to be a fun and enjoyable event.

Manilyn Reynes, Shaina Magdayao, Ena Garcia and Camille Prats will be featured in musical numbers from a variety game show that will give away an appliance showcase and a kiddie computer showcase, plus lots of raffle prizes.

Two lucky families will get to bring home one of the two showcases in the innovative and original game portion called "Labo Labong Letra."

The Lactum family day will also feature fun play areas where the whole family can spend the entire day by playing on a giant Velcro Wall.

Specially bundled cans of Lactum will contain raffle stubs that may entitle parents and kids to join the games, win prizes or just have a good time and avail themselves of the fun attractions. Simply drop the stubs in designated boxes.

After Manila, Pampanga and Cebu, the Lactum family day will culminate June 10 at the Victoria Plaza in Davao City.

The event is made possible by Mead Johnson nutritionals, Sultana Entertainment Enterprises, SM Supermalls, Victoria Plaza and Cebu Pacific.

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Alec Baldwin
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Jon Voight

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8:00 PM - Closed (LRP Foundation/ IPD)
11:30 PM - Pearl Harbor

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VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

HOST: What's the latest on the celebrity wedding preparations there? Is everything ready?

Field reporter: Well, OK *na* OK. There was a Mass celebrated yesterday, as a pre-preparation for the wedding Mass today!

(What in the world is a pre-preparation?)

* * *

Host: What about the wedding decor in the church?

Studio guest: Oh, it's absolutely beautiful, very romantic. The motif is pale pink and ecru, so you'll be seeing a lot of pale pink and ecru!

(Duh . . .)

* * *

Host: What about you, are you planning to get married?

Cohost: But of course *naman, no*? If you're not married, you're not complete!

Host: *Ganoon ba 'yon*?

Cohost: Well, on a way!

(Huh?)

* * *

Host: What's your analysis of the latest Abu Sayyaf kidnap-hostage case? Will it be solved soon?

Guest: I don't know, it's so vague, the reports—

Host: Yes, reports have been coming in from the field, the location of the kidnappers—

Guest: Pero puro fools report!

(In more ways than one . . .)

* * *

Host: How do you feel, now that you have been given your break in the movies?

Starlet: Happy *ako*, *siyempre*, excited. I want to do my best.

Host: What role do you want to pl ay? Drama?

Starlet: Yes, so I can show my dramatic-ness! (Huh?)

* * *

Host: What can you say about all the charges being raised against you?

Guest: They're all lies! They spread lies to besmirk my honor!

(Smirk, smirk . . .)

* * *

Host: Why is your investigation so slow?

Official: We are still analyzing all of the leads. But, I assure you, tomorrow we will file changes against all of those imbold!

(How—bold!)

* * *

Host: I hear that you and your wife have separated?

Guest: No, that's not true. If you go to our house, you will see for yourself.

Host: So, it's just a rumor?

Guest: Yes, if you go, you will see, we are still living in the same roof!

(That's quite a trick . . .)

* * *

Host: How have you been, ever since you joined the government? You look tired.

Guest: But I try to look at the brighter side. Why does the government always have to be the hardbigger of bad news?

(Hardbigger?—Oh, you mean harbinger.)

* * *

Newscaster: In another encounter, a man was killed by a gunman late last night. Only one bullet fell the victim dead.

(*Ano daw*?)

* * *

Host: So, (name of actress) has finally left her husband?

Co-host: Finally – after all these years of being so blind.

Host: What was the last straw?

Co-host: She caught her husband and his girlfriend in a very decompromising situation!

(What's that?!)

* * *

Host: You did well in your last movie, a comedy. Is that what you want to specialize in?

Actor: No, I want to be an all-around actor – half comedian, half action, and half drama!

(Guess that's what they mean by the new math!)

'Snore-a! Snore-a! Snore-a!' defends position vs 'Shrek'

LOS ANGELES—After suffering a heavy artillery attack from critics, the World War Two epic romance "Pearl Harbor" clung to the No. 1 spot at the North American weekend box office, barely holding off the hit cartoon "Shrek," according to studio estimates issued on Sunday.

"Pearl Harbor," released by Walt Disney Co.'s Touchstone Pictures, grossed about $30 million for the Friday-to-Sunday period, followed by "Shrek" (DreamWorks) with $28.4 million and the new Rob Schneider comedy "The Animal" (Columbia) with $19.8 million.

After 10 days in release, "Pearl Harbor" has pulled in $119.3 million, having cost a reported $140 million to produce.

Despite such attacks as "Snore-a! Snore-a! Snore-a!" from the Wall Street Journal, audiences appeared more forgiving.

The Michael Bay-directed film passed the century mark on Saturday, its ninth day and a company record for Disney, surpassing the 10-day record of both "Toy Story 2" (1999) and "The Lion King" (1994).

The wartime drama, which stars Ben Affleck and Kate Beckinsale, lost 49 percent of its audience from the equivalent three days of the Memorial Day holiday last weekend. While the fall seems steep, it was actually less than the 53 percent drops for previous Memorial Day holiday openers "The Lost World: Jurassic Park" (1997) and "Mission: Impossible 2" (2000), said Disney distribution president Chuck Viane.

"Shrek," a fairy tale spoof about a green ogre's quest for love, fell just 33 percent. It has grossed $148.6 million after 17 days in wide release, and is tracking better than Disney's "The Lion King," which holds the cartoon record with $313 million.

Industry observers expect the new film to reach $270 million, about what "Lion King" had earned before Disney pulled it from theaters early and re-released it a few months later with a different marketing campaign.

DreamWorks distribution president Jim Tharp said his closely held company was considering a similar strategy, but had not made up its mind. ***Reuters***

POWER PLANT
CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

TRAFFIC - P 13 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00	PEARL HARBOR - P 13 11:00, 2:30, 6:00, 9:30	PEARL HARBOR - P 13 11:40, 3:10, 6:40, 10:10
MUMMY RETURNS - P 13 11:30, 2:10, 4:50, 7:30, 10:10	ANGEL EYES - P 13 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00	PEARL HARBOR - P 13 12:20, 3:50, 7:20, 10:50

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WOWIE DE GUZMAN
& PIEL MORENA
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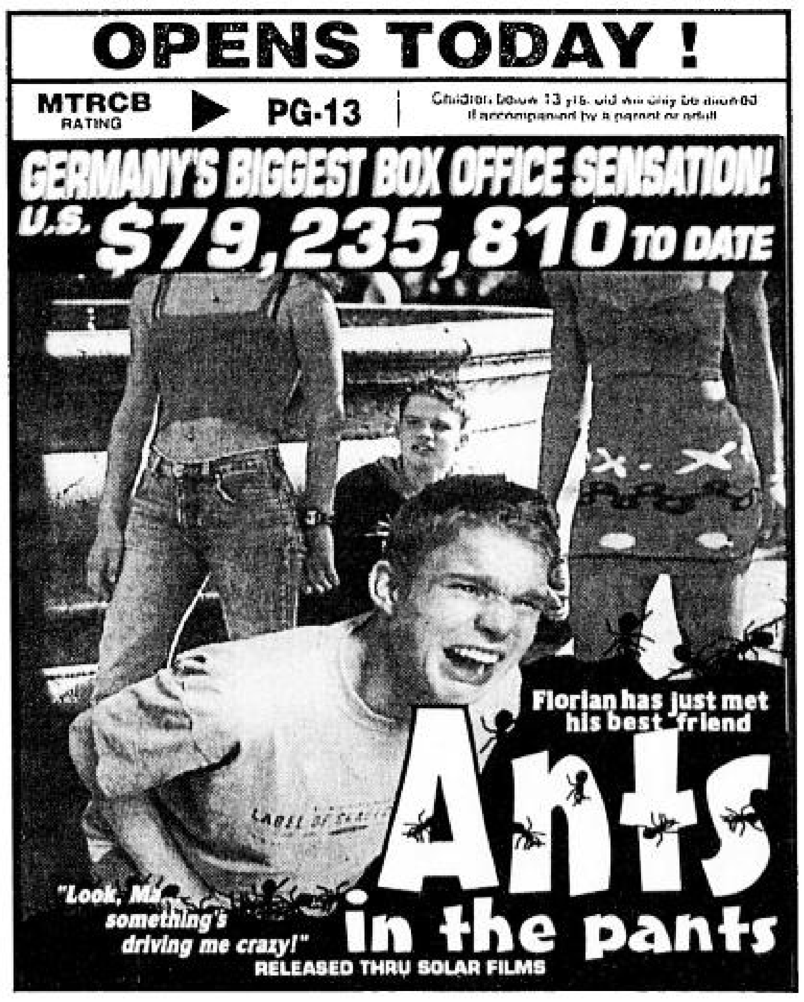

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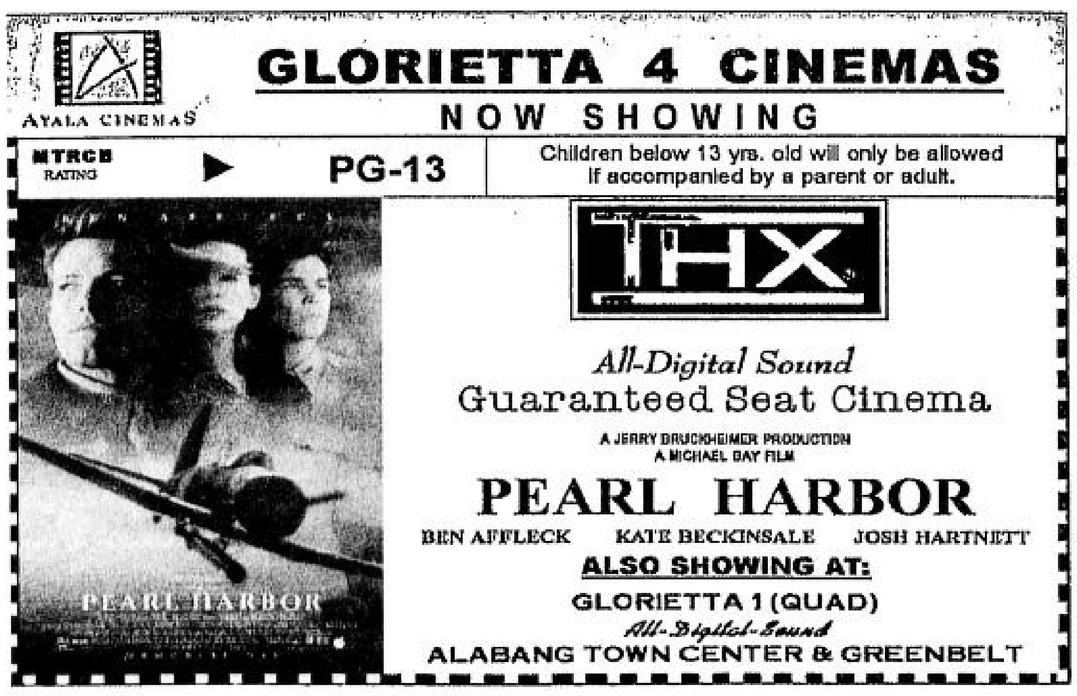

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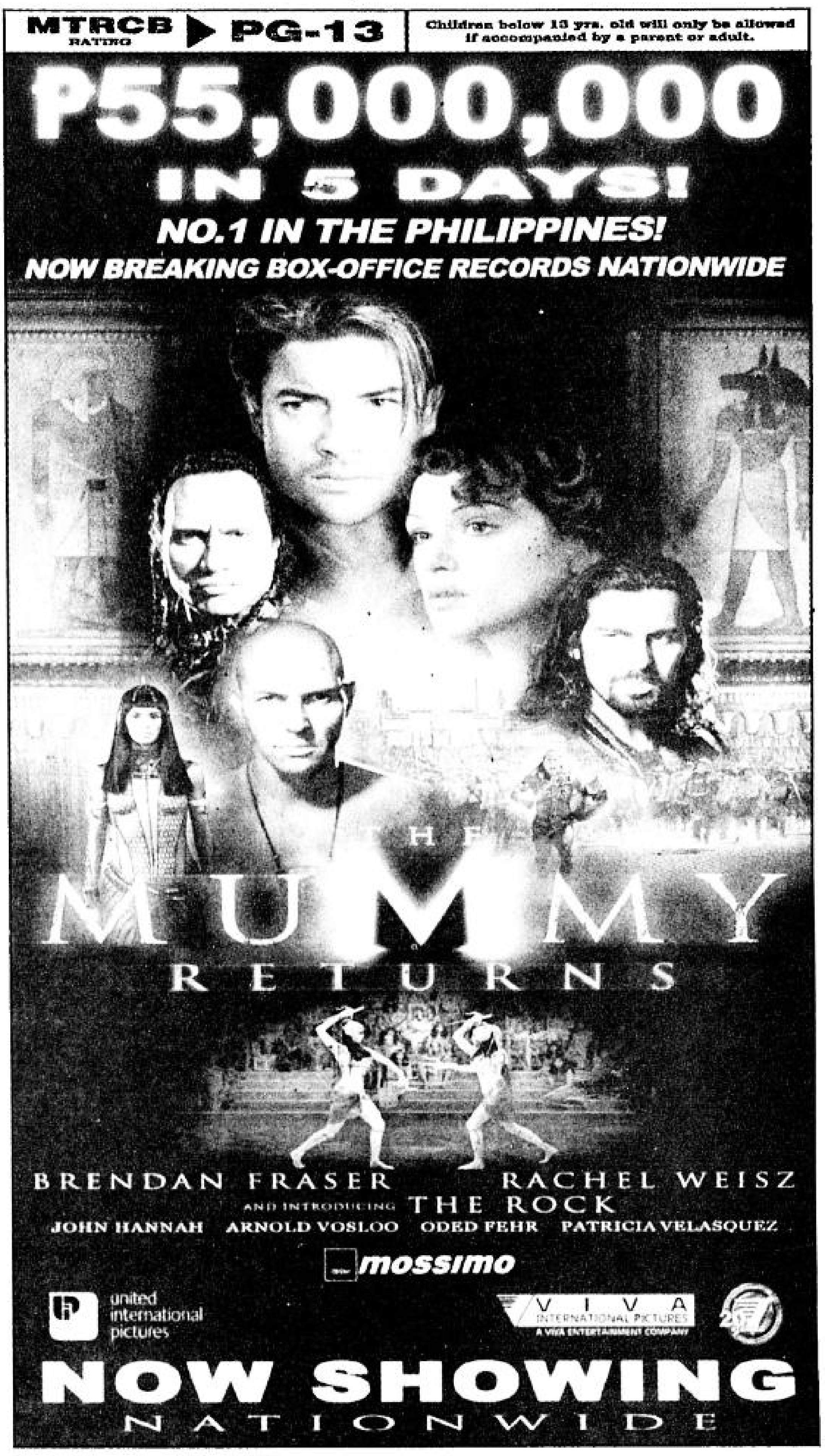

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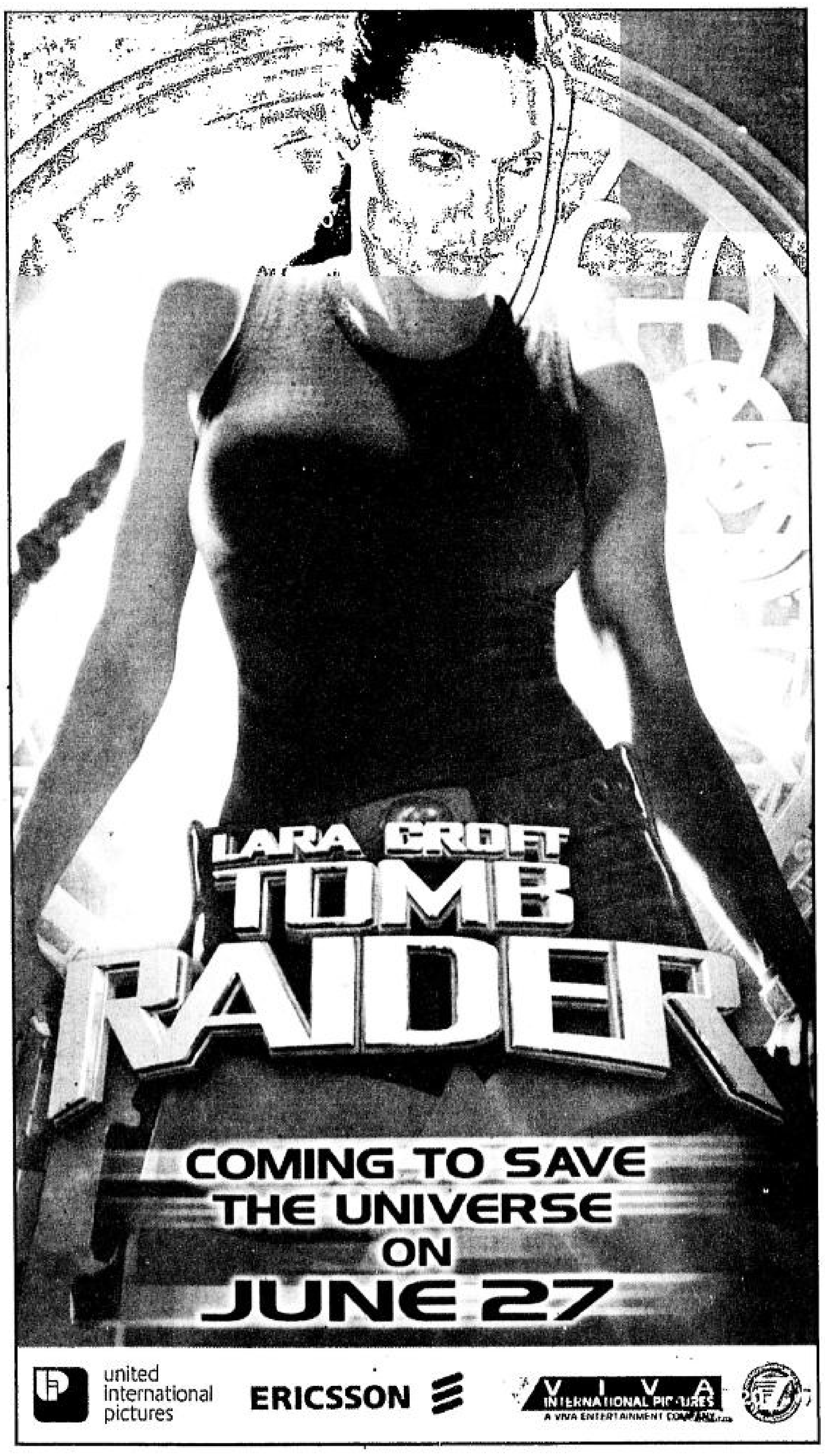

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ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Tony crowns 'offensive' but widely watched 'The Producers'

NEW YORK—"The Producers," a musical satire of Broadway that makes fun of Jews, gays, old women and Hitler, high-kicked its way to a record 12 Tony Awards Sunday night in what amounted to a coronation of the biggest theater hit in New York in 25 years.

Film director Mel Brooks' adaptation of his 1968 movie met all expectations of critics and theater audiences by eclipsing the 10 Tony Awards bestowed on the musical "Hello Dolly" in 1964. "The Producers" has been described as the most widely praised and watched Broadway show since "A Chorus Line" raised the roof in 1975.

"The Producers" won in the best musical, best book, best score, best director and best leading actor categories, among others.

The play "Proof," about a young mathematical genius plagued by fears of inheriting her father's mental illness along with his mathematical talent, won three Tonys in the best play, best director and leading actress categories.

Brooks won the trophy for best original score ahead of a field including the critically acclaimed "The Full Monty," "A Class Act" and "Jane Eyre," musicals that Brooks himself said would have walked away with the prizes had it not been for the phenomenal appreciation for "The Producers."

"In any other year you guys would have won, I assure you," Brooks said after accepting the Tony for the best score at a Radio City Music Hall gala, referring to the late Ed Kleiban ("A Class Act"), David Yazbek ("The Full Monty") and Paul Gordon and John Caird ("Jane Eyre").

"But this is a phenomenon, so forgive us for that," said funny man Brooks, best known for his humorous movies. In the event's final act, Brooks accepted the Tony Award for best musical in the spirit of the show he created, saying: "I want to thank Hitler for being such a funny guy on stage" as he lifted a comb to his upper lip to form a Hitler-like mustache.

The show, which includes a kickline of Nazi storm troopers, is a comedy about two losers, Bialystock and Bloom, played by Broadway stars Nathan Lane and Matthew Broderick, who seek success and enrichment by putting on the worst musical of all time, titled "Springtime for Hitler."

Lane and Broderick were both nominated for best performance by a leading actor, but the 705 producers, theater owners, journalists and

TONY/ A29

BRODERICK

LANE

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Navy nurses and Pearl Harbor

It was literally like waking up to a beautiful Sunday morning, and then suddenly entering hell

This was the experience for thousands of civilians and United States Navy personnel including a brave contingent of nurses, when, on December 7, 1941, the Japanese unexpectedly and without provocation attacked and bombed the serene port of Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

According to actress Kate Beckinsale, who thoroughly researched her role to star as Navy nurse Evelyn Johnson in Touchstone Pictures/Jerry Bruckheimer Films' epic drama "Pearl Harbor," "Hawaii seemed like a great place to be stationed because there wasn't very much for the nurses to do. They could hang out and sunbathe and have a great time. It seemed like a very relaxing place to go. They (the nurses) were young women who'd never seen active service, so they didn't have a lot of field experience to draw on."

Until that fateful day, life was rather peaceful for the Navy nurses. They worked at a sparkling new hospital where in the beginning at least, the biggest challenge may have been caring for a case of sunburn. Their work hours were spent taking inventory of supplies and keeping the facility clean. They weren't prepared to become heroes. But fate had a different scenario planned for them.

"There were an extraordinary number of casualties," Beckinsale continues recounting her knowledge of that infamous day. "The nurses could obviously hear the explosions and machine gun fire from the attack and American retaliation, so they knew people were badly wounded and being killed. But their emotions had to come later. They were thrown into a life and death situation and they made a big difference. A lot of them suffered stress shock disorder afterwards, but for the time being they handled themselves bravely and professionally."

"And they had to make due with limited medical supplies. The hospital was not stocked for a war situation. So, obviously, they ran out of everything they needed very fast, including splints, bandages and pain relieving medication. There wasn't enough to go around. It was very grim."

"Pearl Harbor" focuses on the life-changing events surrounding December 7, 1941, and the war's devastating impact on two daring young pilots (Ben Affleck and Josh Hartnett) and a dedicated Navy nurse (Kate Beckinsale). Directed by Michael Bay ("Armageddon") from a screenplay by Randal Wallace ("Braveheart"), it is an epic tale of catastrophic defeat, heroic victory, and personal courage set against a stunning backdrop of spectacular wartime action.

The modern day Navy nurse can be traced to the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, which in 1908, with congressional approval, formed the Navy Nurse Corps. Applicants had to be graduated nurses with at least two years' formal training as well as clinical experience.

In the years leading up the First World War, the corps expanded to over 160 naval nurses assigned to navy hospitals within the continental United States and overseas—including Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

In addition to normal nursing duties, they were expected to specialize as well as provide training and supervision for enlisted hospital apprentices and local nurses.

By the early 1920s, after post-World War I naval reductions, the Navy Nurse Corps' strength stood at 500—a level that was maintained throughout the decade.

Between the two world wars, navy nursing made substantial professional gains. By the time of the first permanent positions aboard navy ships in late 1920, when the USS Relief went into commission, paid retirement and disability were authorized, and continuing education was encouraged, which led to nurses being trained in such specialties as dietetics, laboratory techniques, tuberculosis treatment, physiotherapy, and anesthesia.

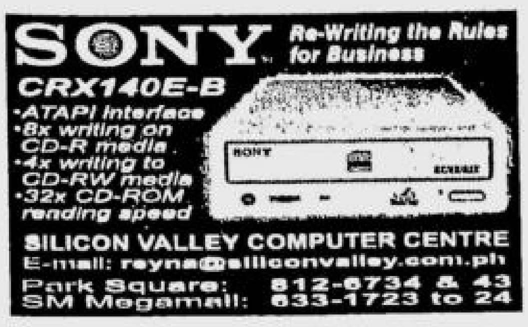
Navy nurse responsibilities also included instructing the navy's hospital corpsmen and local nurses in U.S. overseas territories. In addition to caring for naval personnel, nurses responded to a number of civil disasters, such as the evacuation of dependents from war-torn China in 1937.

The Great Depression brought drastic reductions to navy personnel. By 1935, the number of nurses decreased to less than 350 and did not return to its previous strength until the defense increases of 1940-41 were underway. After this, the Navy Nurse Corps grew substantially, with over 800 nurses on active duty on the eve of the United States' entry into World War II.

Although history books often overlook the enormous contributions of nurses whose courage at Pearl Harbor made them war heroes in their own right, "Pearl Harbor" portrays the spirit of these stalwart women.

"The nurses at Pearl Harbor had an enormous amount of suffering to deal with," Kate Beckinsale concludes. "Acting in this film, I can only imagine what it must have been like."

A Touchstone Pictures/Jerry Bruckheimer Films presentation distributed by Buena Vista International, "Pearl Harbor" opens today in Metro Manila theaters.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BUSINESS
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HONDA

54% jump in Maynilad rate looms

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE GOVERNMENT is willing to allow the Lopez-owned Maynilad Water Services Inc. to recover its foreign exchange losses through a P5-per-cubic-meter increase in its rate over the next 18 months.

This will represent an increase of 54 percent from the current rate of P9.27 per cubic meter for Maynilad customers. The government, however, estimates that an average household will only see a P20 increase in its monthly water bill.

The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System's Board of Trustees and officials of Maynilad are now finalizing details of the rate adjustment to resolve the private utility's financial woes.

Maynilad had been pressing the government to allow it to recover some P2.7 billion in losses arising from the sharp depreciation in the value of the peso against the dollar. Maynilad absorbed the bulk of the MWSS's foreign loans when it won the bidding for half of the water firm's concession area.

Public Works Secretary Simeon Datumanong, who also chairs the MWSS Board of Trustees, said in an interview that while they have agreed in principle on the P5-per-cubic-meter increase, the MWSS Regulatory Office is further studying its impact on consumers.

"We hope to finally solve the impasse between MWSS and Maynilad with this rate mechanism that (can be implemented) without altering the concession agreement," Datumanong told the INQUIRER.

Maynilad stopped paying its concession fee of P200 million a month to the MWSS since March after the government turned down its request to have an automatic currency exchange rate (Auto-Cera) adjustment scheme to recover fluctuations in the exchange rate.

The new water rate scheme was the result of studies conducted by the government negotiating panel made up of the MWSS Regulatory Office, the Department of Finance and the National Economic and Development Authority.

Maynilad is a joint venture between the Lopez group and the Suez Lyonnaise des Eaux of France. It accounts for the west zone, which includes Manila, Pasay, Las Piñas, Malabon, Muntinlupa, Valenzuela, Navotas, Parañaque, Bacoor, Kawit, Imus, Cavite City, Noveleta, Rosario and parts of Taguig and Quezon City.

The government panel earlier considered a one- to three-year recovery period for Maynilad, which would mean different implications on the monthly water bills of household and commercial consumers.

"For instance, a two- to three-year forex recovery will add to as much as P30 per month for every household," a study prepared by the Neda said.

As a contingency measure, the government has prepared a takeover plan of the west zone from Maynilad in case negotiations would fail.

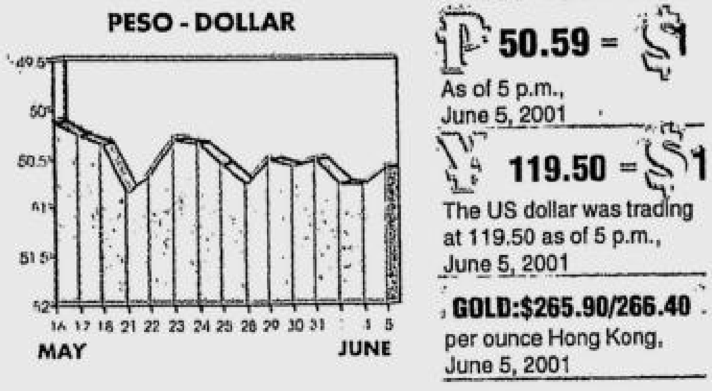
Neda chief Dante Canlas added that aside from its problem with the government, Maynilad also had to deal with issues raised by its lenders, which recently stopped the release of some $350 million in loans this year.

According to First Philippine Holdings vice president and Maynilad director for project finance Francis Gilles Puno, they could still work out the release of these loans provided Maynilad settles its current dispute with the government.

"Part of (the creditors') demand is for us to get an assurance that we could increase our basic water tariff through our extraordinary pricing adjustments and if we could start preparing for our rate rebasing as early as this year," Puno told the INQUIRER.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



Peso-Dollar Rate

₱50.59 = $1

As of 5 p.m., June 5, 2001

¥119.50 = $1

The US dollar was trading at 119.50 as of 5 p.m., June 5, 2001

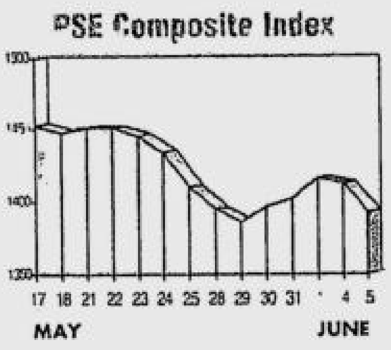
GOLD:$265.90/266.40 per ounce Hong Kong, June 5, 2001

June 5, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.181474	1.000000	50.8000
Japan	Yen	0.009888	0.008369	0.4251
United Kingdom	Pound	1.671786	1.415000	71.8820
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.151474	0.128208	6.5130
Switzerland	Franc	0.658644	0.557476	28.3198
Canada	Dollar	0.769289	0.651126	33.0772
Singapore	Dollar	0.651489	0.551420	28.0121
Australia	Dollar	0.599490	0.507408	25.7763
Bahrain	Dinar	3.134051	2.652661	134.7552
Kuwait	Dinar	N/A	N/A	N/A
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.315077	0.266681	13.5474
Brunei	Dollar	0.649876	0.550055	27.9428
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000104	0.000088	0.0045
Thailand	Baht	0.026035	0.022036	1.1194
UAE	Dirham	0.321708	0.272294	13.8325
Korea	Won	0.000920	0.000779	0.0396
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.846400	42.9971
Germany	Mark	0.511291	0.432757	21.9841
France	Franc	0.152450	0.129033	6.5549
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453781	0.384080	19.5113
Austria	Schilling	0.072672	0.061510	3.1247
Belgium	Franc	0.024790	0.020982	1.0659
Italy	Lire	0.000516	0.000437	0.0222
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.142354	7.2316
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004222	0.2145
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005087	0.2584
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024790	0.020982	1.0659
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.074706	54.5951

STOCK MARKET

Shares dive on heavy selling



(See stock market report on Page B4)

SHARES finished lower on heavy selling in blue chips yesterday, as investors headed for the sidelines without any fresh buying incentives, traders said.

Breaking its 1400-point trendline support, the 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended down 19.74 points, or 1.4 percent, to 1392.71, following Monday's 0.3-percent loss.

Among those hurt was blue-chip Metropolitan Bank, which closed down P3, or 1.4 percent, at P217.

"The market is probably close to capitulation," Equitable PCI Bank fund manager Edison Yap told Dow Jones Newswires. "The signs are there, with blue chips sold down aggressively."

He said large investors have apparently given up on the market, looking elsewhere to invest their funds.

Even the Senate's ratification of a much-awaited power-sector reform bill late Monday failed to produce market interest, Yap said.

"The sobering reality is the power bill is a long-term measure," he said. "Investors are just so jittery with everything, there's no impetus to stay in the market."

AP

Napocor seen losing ₱4B due to power bill

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE STATE-OWNED National Power Corp. is expecting P4 billion in foregone revenues this year with the implementation of the 30-centavo rate reduction that the power bill provides for residential consumers.

Napocor president Jesus N. Alcordo yesterday said the state firm was set to incur losses due to the rebate.

However, he said "industry restructuring would bring down power rates in the long run."

The Senate approved the bill Monday following the go-ahead from the House of Representatives last Friday.

The bill needs only President Macapagal-Arroyo's signature to become a law.

An official of the Department of Energy told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview that Ms Macapagal was expected to sign the bill "within this week."

Alcordo said the 30-centavo reduction in Napocor's effective selling rate for residential consumers would "take effect immediately upon the passage of the measure."

According to Napocor figures, residential end-users account for 33 percent of total power sales.

The Napocor chief said it would take an average of two months upon implementation for the rate decrease to reflect on consumers' electricity bills.

On the other hand, Napocor said it lost only P790 million in the first quarter, which meant a 76.5-percent recovery from the year-ago loss of P3.4 billion.

The firm attributed the improvement to an 11-percent increase in power sales and an 87-percent gain in the ratio of its operating expenses to net utility value (operating ratio). This enabled Napocor to chalk up a 5.98-percent return on rate base against the previous quarter's 2.22 percent.

Alcordo also said he was looking forward to Napocor's privatization, particularly of its generating assets. "We can now correct the situation where (Napocor) is a monopoly, where the customers are the ones who adjust to us."

He said they expected to go on a roadshow to sell the firm's generating companies or gencos to investors. He said Napocor has a ready grouping for the gencos, but added this would ultimately depend on the attitude of prospective investors.

Lower BSP rates seen

By Clarissa S. Batino

A DECLINING inflation trend could pull down the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' overnight borrowing rate to 8.25 percent and its lending rate to 10.5 percent within the year, according to BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura.

He said the BSP's policy-making Monetary Board could reduce overnight rates during its regular meeting tomorrow, way ahead of an expected cut in US short-term interest rates later this month.

The BSP's overnight borrowing and lending rates currently stand at 9 percent and 11.25 percent, respectively. A three-quarter-point reduction in rates would bring the rates down to their level two years ago, or even before Buenaventura's term started in July 1999.

Fresh from a conference of international monetary officials in Singapore, Buenaventura welcomed a lower-than-expected inflation rate of 6.5 percent last month and said that a favorable trend may even lead to a consumer price index of 5.5 percent toward the end of the year.

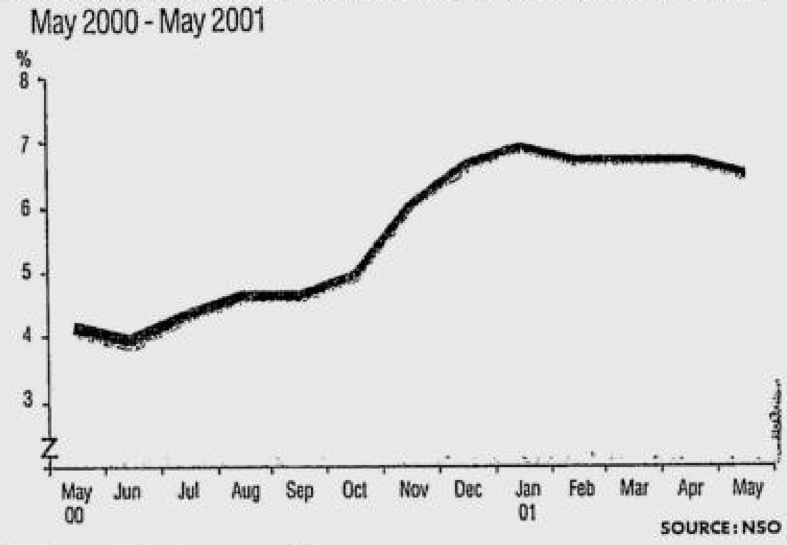
"The overnight (borrowing) rate could go down to 8.5 percent within the year if the downward inflation trend continues. The good news gives us an opportunity to discuss whether a further rate cut could be done this week," the central bank governor said in a phone interview.

Buenaventura said inflation would likely average at 6.25 percent for the rest of the year. This rate is much lower than the 6.9 percent in January and 6.7 percent from February to April.

LOWER/ B3

National Inflation Rates

May 2000 - May 2001



SOURCE: NSO

Inflation eases to 6.5% in May

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COUNTRY'S annual inflation rate fell to a six-month low of 6.5 percent in May from 6.7 percent the previous month despite pressure from the additional liquidity brought by the national elections held last month.

The lower inflation rate was made possible by the further softening of the consumer price index for food, beverage and tobacco, which dropped to 3.8 percent from 4.2 percent; housing and repairs, to 6.6 percent from 6.8 percent; and, fuel, light and water, to 12.2 percent from 13.8 percent.

However, there was an uptick in the index for clothing, which went up to 3.9 percent from 3.8 percent, and services, which rose to 14.1 percent from 13.9 percent.

The inflation rate for food alone declined to 3.6 percent in May from 4 percent in April. Slower rates were recorded in the price of rice, the country's main staple, as well as in the prices of cereal preparations, fish, fruits and vegetables. However, faster rates were recorded in the prices of corn, dairy products and eggs while meat prices remained at April levels.

The inflation rate in Metro Manila dropped to 7.2 percent from 8.1 percent but consumer prices in the provinces rose by 6.3 percent, up from the previous month's 6.2 percent.

The month-on-month inflation also dropped to 0.1 percent in May from 0.3 percent in April due to the slowdown in the fuel, light and water index.

"There was an abundant supply of commodities despite the rise in the de facto supply of money chasing goods," Wellex Global Equities research head James Lago said.

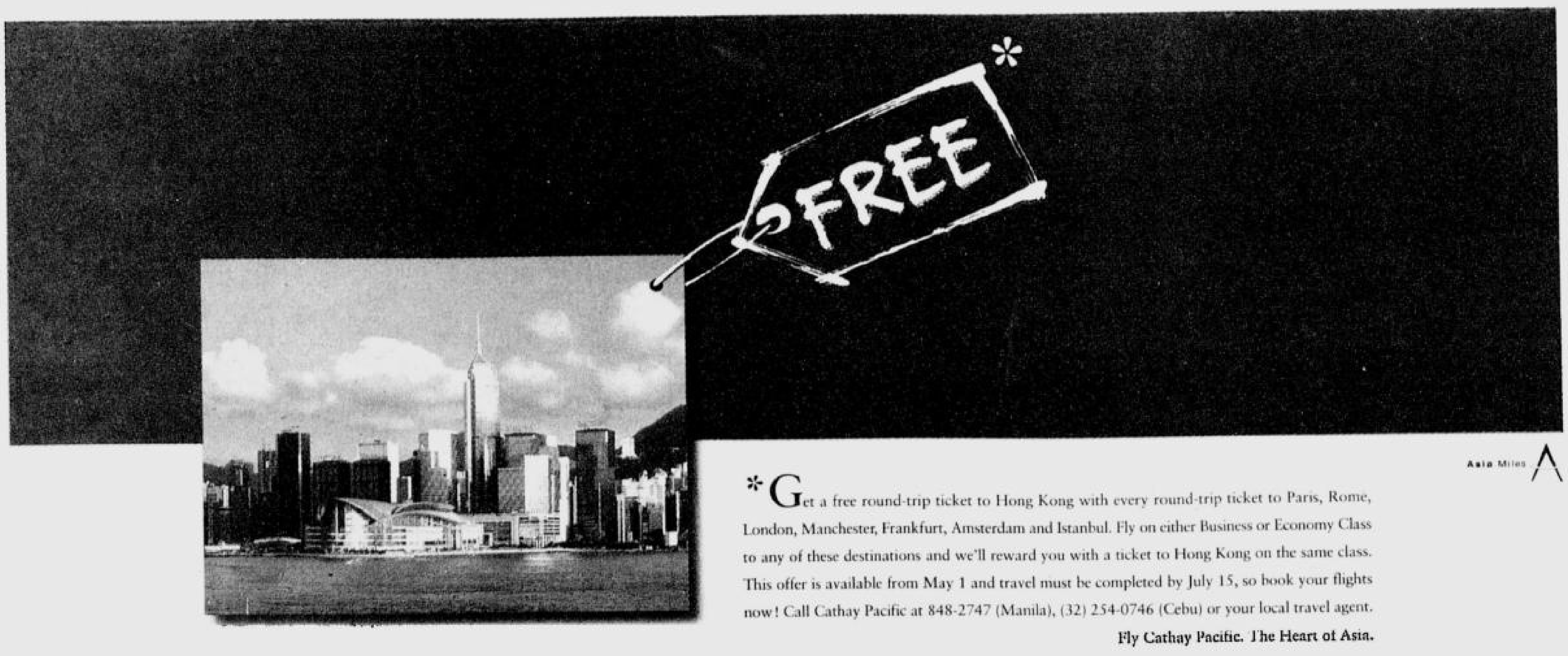
An increase in money supply floating in the system exerts pressure on inflation since it tempts consumers to buy more goods. This additional demand drives up the prices of goods, especially when there is a supply shortage.

But even as the less aggressive election spending this year helped temper the rise in the prices of consumer goods last month, analysts said the inflation rate was not likely to slow down further in the next few months due to renewed volatility in oil prices.

"The local oil companies just raised their price at the end of May and the impact of that will be felt this month. Inflation will thus move between 6.5 percent and 7 percent," Lago said.

Mark Securities head of research Manny Cruz said the lower May inflation rate was expected as the consumer

INFLATION/ B3



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FOR MISLEADING THE PUBLIC

SEC panel recommends sanctions vs Piltel

By Elena R. Torrijos

A SPECIAL team formed by the Securities and Exchange Commission has recommended the slapping of sanctions against Pilipino Telephone Corp. and SGV & Co. for misleading the public about Piltel's financial condition.

The commission, however, has decided to wait for a second opinion on the issue, according to documents obtained by the INQUIRER.

The SEC created a team early this year to investigate reports that Piltel window-dressed its financial statements as of end-1998. It assigned a lawyer and two certified public accountants to this team.

The team, composed of members of the SEC's corporate finance and compliance and enforcement departments, recommended that sanctions be slapped against Piltel "for stating untrue statements of material facts in its statement of management responsibility."

It also endorsed the imposition of sanctions against SGV and its certifying partner for signing Piltel's 1998 audit report.

The SEC has the authority to require what information shall be set for in the balance sheets and income statements and the methods to be followed in the preparation of accounts.

In January 1999, news came out that Piltel had amassed debts amounting to over P30 billion. These liabilities were disclosed in Piltel's periodic reports, but the company failed to inform the SEC about how these debts would affect its operations and cash flow. Piltel also failed to disclose promptly that it defaulted payments on the interest and principal that same month.

A previous team formed by the SEC recommended an actual field audit of Piltel's books and records. It also required the company to come up with a detailed explanation of its finances.

In its last report on Piltel dated July 23, 1999, the SEC found that Piltel failed to comply with its obligation to make a full, fair and accurate disclosure to the public of every material fact or event.

After a Piltel representative met with then SEC Chair Perfecto Yasay Jr., however, no formal direction for the investigative committee was given.

Last month, Piltel announced that it concluded the master restructuring agreement with its various creditors for the restructuring of its debts, which had already reached P40 billion.

SEC sues Barclays Group for estafa, SRC violation

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has filed a case with the Department of Justice against Barclays Group Inc. and its incorporators and directors for estafa and violation of the country's securities laws.

In filing the case against Barclays, the SEC said it wanted to send a strong message to the public that it would clamp down hard on any securities fraud operations and would not hesitate to enforce the full effect of the law.

The SEC believed that the Barclays case was just one of the growing number of boiler-room operations that have been victimizing thousands of foreign investors around the world through fraudulent investment schemes.

Included in the complaint filed by the SEC were: Barclays incorporators/directors Rolando S. Fernandez, Pedro T. Songco, Isagani C. Jose, Arturo J. Lapid, and Enrique Beech Jr., and Barclays brokers and telemarketers Joseph Burke, Greg Weaver, Jason Scott, Sandy Porcalla, Cristy Cristobal, Chona M. Ramos and Luis Lao.

In a statement, the SEC alleged that the respondents had set up a corporation in the Philippines which, without a secondary license to deal in securities and without registered brokers/dealers/salesmen, sold securities to individuals abroad through the telephone. These activities are referred to as "boiler room" securities operations.

Once the money is collected or when the government starts closing in on the illegal practice, boiler room companies simply close shop, leaving the investors with nothing. They usually reopen under a different name and continue their fraudulent investment scheme, the SEC said.

The SEC is adopting a tougher stance against corporations engaged in the sale of unregistered investment contracts. Recently, a composite team of SEC and the National Bureau of Investigation officials shut down the office of Prosperity.com for the company's continued violation of SEC orders of the SEC.

Elena R. Torrijos

Gov't forms Subic-Clark development task force

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

ANGELES CITY—The conversion of two former United States military bases into Central Luzon's civilian industrial anchors takes a major turn this month with the creation of the Subic-Clark Alliance Development Task Force, the Presidential Commission for the Central Luzon Growth Corridor announced Monday.

Within the month, Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II and the chief executives of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, Clark Development Corp., Bases Conversion Development Authority, the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel and two private sector representatives to be designated by President Macapagal-Arroyo are signing the task force's memorandum of understanding, the commission said.

The task force is emerging on the 10th year of the base conversion process, which the government began right after the Mt. Pinatubo eruptions in 1991.

In 1990, the government prepared the blueprint for the makeover of Clark Air Base in Pampanga and Subic Naval Base in Zambales in anticipation of their closure by the Philippine Senate.

On Sept. 16, 1991, the Senate rejected the extension of the Philippine-US Military Bases Agreement, which banned the presence of foreign bases and troops.

The commission, which Roxas also heads, said the task force would map out plans for the implementation of the Subic-Clark Alliance Development (SCAD) program.

The task force will also implement common programs, policies, rules and regulations to pursue the common goals of the SCAD program, the commission said.

"It will also create a common investment incentive package with the least amount of bureaucratic red tape and with sufficient flexibility for implementation within the context of the specific mandates of each economic zone," the commission said.

The task force, the commission added, would also review, identify and recommend priority infrastructure projects for implementation as well as lay down financial program to bankroll the project.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
Maynila, Pilipinas

CIRCULAR-LETTER

TO: ALL CONCERNED

Please be advised that the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has not authorized the operation of the "ISLAMIC BANK" formed by Mr. DAUD GABRIEL MANGOMPIA and other private individuals and private corporations, with office address at No. 3, Block 11, Marawi Avenue, Maharlika Village, Bicutan, Metro Manila.

These individuals also refer to this so-called "ISLAMIC BANK" as the AL AMANAH ISLAMIC INVESTMENT BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES which they represent however, to be a PRIVATELY-OWNED ISLAMIC BANK. Other business address being used by the group includes Monte de Oro-Islamic Bank Building, No. 80 Monte de Piedad Street, Cubao, Quezon City.

In view of their unauthorized activities, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas is taking action against these individuals under the provisions of Section 6 of the General Banking Act, as amended (R.A. No. 337), which states:

> "No person, association, or corporation not conducting the business of a commercial banking corporation, trust corporation, savings and mortgage bank, development bank, rural bank, savings and loan association, or building and loan association, as defined in this Act, or other banking laws, shall advertise or hold itself out as being engaged in the business of such bank, corporation, or association, or use in connection with its business title the word or words "bank," "banking," "banker," "building and loan association," "savings and loan association," "trust corporation" "trust company,"or words of similar import, or solicit or receive deposits of money for deposit, disbursement, safekeeping, otherwise, or transact in any manner the business of any such bank, corporation or association, without having first complied with the provisions of this Act or other banking laws. For any violation of the provisions of this section by a corporation, the officers and directors thereof shall be punished by a fine of five hundred pesos for each day during which such violation is continued or repeated, and in default of the payment thereof, subsidiary imprisonment as prescribed by law."

Presently, the only Islamic bank operating in the Philippines is the government-owned AL-AMANAH ISLAMIC INVESTMENT BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES (AIIBP). AIIBP is duly recognized by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas pursuant to the provisions of R.A No. 6848 and is owned by the National Government, the Social Security System, the Government Service Insurance System, the Development Bank of the Philippines, and the Asset Privatization Trust. Its Chairman of the Board is Mr. FAROUK A. CARPIZO whose election/appointment, together with the other members of the board, was confirmed by the Monetary Board, in its Resolution No. 1129 dated August 13, 1999.

AIIBP's Executive Office is located at Classica Condominium 1, 2nd Floor, Unit D & E, 112 H.V. dela Costa Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City.

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Tri-band triumphant

COCKTALES

By Victor C. Agustin

NEW YORK—Stung by bad reviews from this space about their S40, Siemens challenged Cocktales to give its new tri-band phone another round of actual consumer tests also here in the Big Apple.

We accepted the challenge, and even made an overnight stop in San Francisco to see if this touted phone-PDA-tape recorder has actually been debugged as Siemens now claims.

Unlike the first unit we brought to New York in April, the new version S40 connected instantaneously with the cellular provider in the Bay Area, Cingular. Within a minute of activation, the stored text messages, sent to us while on the trans-Pacific transit, were beeping their presence.

The S40 even gave the Spanish-American immigration officer momentary alarm as we showed the phone, asking us to "please do not record" the by-the-book questions that he was subjecting us with. (If the S40 is a secret weapon with its five-minute recording capacity, wait 'til the officer sees the SL45 with its five-hour—that's right, five hours—recording capability.)

And unlike the unit that we used in April, this S40 now receives phone calls from the Philippines. It can also now place calls to the Philippines, although each and every call would have to pass through Sprint, the US partner carrier of Smart.

In New York, the S40 also worked seamlessly above-ground but inside the subway is another matter, through no fault of Siemens. Like much of the United States, New York is still predominantly analog territory. While New Yorkers can yak uninterrupted in the "A" train through their local mobiles, we had been unable to use the S40 at all as soon as we descend into any subway station.

Still, the S40 should provide coverage to some 300 major metropolitan cities (and their airports) all over the United States, as these urban centers have already been placed under the digital map, per advertised claims of US cellular companies now also beginning to offer dual-band services.

If all goes well, Siemens should this weekend be able to finally place into local customers' hands the improved S40s after aggressively pre-selling it in the malls.

The German telecommunications/electric giant, now a distant second to the Finnish Nokia in local cell phone sales, has even undercut Nokia's best-seller 8890 by as much as P7,000, offering an open-line S40 by less than P20,000 as against the 8890's

P27,000-plus suggested retail price. Although the 8890 is smaller, thinner, and sleeker than the S40, Nokia's top-of-the-line model is still a dual-band. Including the SIM card, the 8890 has a respectable 500-phonebook capacity.

The S40, on the other hand, can store a whopping 2,000 names and 6,000 phone numbers; a businessman or a journalist wishing to still travel lighter may now confidently leave the Filofax before hitting the road.

For global road warriors who need to bring only one phone in Europe, the United States and Asia, it looks like the S40 (the only other tri-band is a user-unfriendly, a clunky Motorola) has the field all to itself.

Erap PHDs

THEIR disgraced patron may be gone, but the PHDs (BIR shorthand for "Presidential Hand Directives) in the Bureau of Internal Revenue are waging an Edsa III-of-sorts in an effort to retain the lucrative assignments handed them by the Erap Malacañang.

Last Sunday, the PHDs placed half-page ads in the papers to prevail on President Macapagal-Arroyo to replace their new boss, Commissioner Rene Bañez.

With Bañez instituting reforms and reassignments in the BIR, 11 of the PHDs, as well as the brother of Lenny "Dragon Lady" de Jesus, had been yanked out of the tax-rich Binondo, Makati, and Quezon City districts and been made to join the BIR Navy (a.k.a. floating status).

The 11, who had jumped five ranks to become regional district officers on the strength of the Erap marginal notes, have taken on sheep's clothing and issued motherhood statements in their appeal, asking the President for an "untainted successor" to Bañez.

Untainted? Looks more like the pot calling the kettle black.

Past tense

TALK of timing.

Northwest's inflight magazine, World Traveler, featured this month in its "Present Tense" a hitherto unknown Palawan island resort, Dos Palmas.

"Stepping off the outriggered *bangka* at Dos Palmas resort, you'll feel a little like Jacques Cousteau discovering another of the world's natural treasures . . .," so began a three-paragraph description plus photograph of the now infamous resort.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

Gov't to issue ₱5B worth of agri-agra bonds in July

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE MACAPAGAL administration is set to issue starting next month P50 billion worth of five- and 10-year farm sector bonds that would serve as alternative for banks that are having a hard time complying with the mandatory agriculture-agrarian reform lending policy.

National Treasurer Sergio Edeza said the Bureau of Treasury would issue an initial P5 billion worth of five-year agri-agra bonds in the first week of July.

The Department of Finance has approved the issuance and the Treasury is only waiting for the go-ahead of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the Malacañang.

The farm sector bonds are meant to replace the five-year treasury bonds that the Treasury had temporarily scrapped after the government realized the market's appetite has been focused on shorter-term papers.

The Treasury then thought of re-focusing the bonds to address the banks' deficiencies in complying with the mandatory agri-agra lending requirement. Edeza earlier said the government could issue P10 billion worth of farm sector bonds this year.

The rate of the farm bonds could be pegged to the five-year Progress bonds issued last year at 13.875 percent.

"This agri-agra bonds would be better because it would address a deficiency in compliance of banks and, in the process, raise funds for the government," he said.

The new farm bonds add up to earlier agri-agra alternatives including a subscription to the Erap bonds, local government bonds or even bonds for socialized housing.

A portion of the funds from the new bonds, according to Edeza, would be used to pay the advances made by Land Bank of the Philippines to the government that were, in turn, used to pay the agrarian reform and land acquisition program of the government, he said.

The law, PD 717, mandates banks to set aside 25 percent of their loan portfolio—15 percent for agriculture and 10 percent for agrarian reform lending—to help spur growth in the two sectors.

Another 10 percent must be allocated to small and medium enterprises.

Traders and government securities dealers said the plan of the government to issue farm bonds was acceptable to the market, specially as some banks pay penalties for not complying with the law.

Last year, the BSP had reduced slightly the penalties for non-compliance with the agriculture-agrarian mandatory lending policies particularly for smaller banks.

From a range of P500 to P30,000 daily, the policy-making Monetary Board has scaled down the fines to as low as P100 a day, depending on the banks' capitalization as well as degree of compliance.

The central bank had also allowed excess compliance in the 10-percent agrarian reform credit to be used to offset any deficiency in the 15-percent agricultural credit requirement.

Aside from fines, the BSP also imposes non-monetary sanctions such as the suspension of access to BSP credit facilities, suspension of lending or forex operations, interbank clearing privileges, and a revocation of quasi-banking licenses.

The BSP had stressed that the mandatory lending policies were meant to direct bank resources to priority sectors.

ATI bags excellence award

PORT and logistics firm Asian Terminals Inc. (ATI), partly owned and managed by P&O Australia Ltd., won the premier "Business Excellence Award" during the inaugural Australian-New Zealand Chamber of Commerce (Philippines)-ANZ Bank Business Awards held recently.

According to the panel of judges, which included audit-management consulting firms Joaquin Cunanan PricewaterhouseCoopers and SGV Arthur Andersen, ATI, in the face of economic difficulties, "performed with sustained excellence over the last year."

The selection was based on the nominees' financial performance, impact in the market, level of growth and business activities over a reasonable period of time, efficiency of internal organization structure and environmental responsibility.

Imported cement floods RP market

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE PHILIPPINE Cement Manufacturers Corp. yesterday said cement imports continued to flood the local market with Indonesia easing out Taiwan as the top supplier.

Philcemcor general manager Lupo Feliciano reported that cement imports have already doubled their market share from roughly 10 percent last year to more than 20 percent this year due to alleged dumping or sale of cement below market price.

Philcemcor reported that cement imports accounted for 22.3 percent of the 4.59 million metric tons of cement sold in the market last year. Cement imports soared by 85 percent to 982,177 metric tons of cement in the first five months this year from 529,525 metric tons a year ago.

Feliciano said cement sales have been tepid this year due to the economic slowdown, political crisis and continued dearth in construction projects this year. Industry sales were 1.46 percent down so far this year.

Feliciano said that Indonesia has surpassed Taiwan as the biggest source of cement imports. Last month, Indonesia shipped 118,717 metric tons versus Taiwan's 101,900 tons.

Last year, local cement makers alerted the Department of Trade and Industry on the influx of cheap cement from Indonesia which feared to worsen the dumping concerns over shipments from Taiwan and Japan.

A source from the local cement industry said that cement imports coming from Indonesia were not only sold at dumped prices, but they also fall below the country's product standards because they are not monitored by any government agency.

"There are no tracking records or import commodity certificates on cement coming from Indonesia. These cement are underweight and substandard," the industry source said.

The source said that cement from Indonesia—sold under the Horse Cement and Bosowa Cement brands—were shipped to Visayas and Mindanao, particularly Davao, Bacolod, Zamboanga and Cagayan de Oro. In contrast, cement imports from Taiwan and Japan are being unloaded in Metro Manila and Luzon.

Local cement makers have warned that the unabated dumping of cement would continue to worsen until the DTI-Bureau of Import Standards issues its final decision on whether to impose an antidumping bond on cement imports.

Lower BSP rates seen

(From page B1)

A bank analyst said inflation may still go up slightly in June as the economy absorbs the impact of election spending.

The 40- to 50-centavo per liter oil price increase last month would likely be felt starting July, the analyst pointed out.

Buenaventura said a big boost to the plan of local monetary authorities to bring down rates to 8.25 percent this year is the expected cut by the US Federal Reserve later this month and another reduction in August.

"While the inflation trend is more important to us, the expected rate cut in the US would boost our resolve to bring down interest rates further," he said.

Ideally, a low interest rate regime helps spur growth as it allows businesses and individuals access to cheaper funds. However, loan growth has stayed anemic since last year.

"The decline in inflation last month already represents a trend but we have to carefully study this. Clearly, this gives us room to cut our rates for the good of the economy," Buenaventura said.

Lower BSP rates also tend to bring down the government's cost of borrowing as reflected by the treasury bill rates, which track the movement of central bank's policy rates.

Inflation eases . . .

(From page B1)

price index came from a low base last year. Cruz added that there was much reduced election spending compared to previous elections.

"Inflation will likely stay along these levels within the next few months but by the end of the year, there will still be another spike due to Christmas spending," Cruz said.

First Orient Securities head of research Rolando Pineda said there was no mass-based spending from the recently concluded elections, noting that liquidity trickled down only to a few areas in the country.

The country's inflation rate thus averaged 6.7 percent during the first five months of the year. The government is targeting an average inflation rate of 6 to 7 percent for this full year.

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CALATAGAN GOLF CLUB	100,000	110,000
CAMP JOHN HAY	350,000	375,000
CAPITOL HILLS	120,000	130,000
CELEBRITY SPORTS	210,000	215,000
CLUB FILIPINO	300,000	330,000
EAGLE RIDGE A/B*/C**	425,000	450,000*/700,000**
FOREST HILLS A/B*/C**		250,000/300,000*450,000**
MAKATI SPORTS A/B*	445,000*	400,000/450,000*
METRO CLUB A/B*		175,000/180,000*
MANILA POLO CLUB	3,600,000	4,000,000
MANILA SOUTHWOODS A/B*		850,000/975,000*
ORCHARD A/B*/C**	280,000	300,000/425,000*
QUEZON CITY SPORTS	225,000	230,000
RIVIERA GOLF A/B*	250,000	280,000/400,000*
ROCKWELL CLUB	600,000	650,000
TAGAYTAY H-LANDS CC/GOLF*		450,000/1.0M
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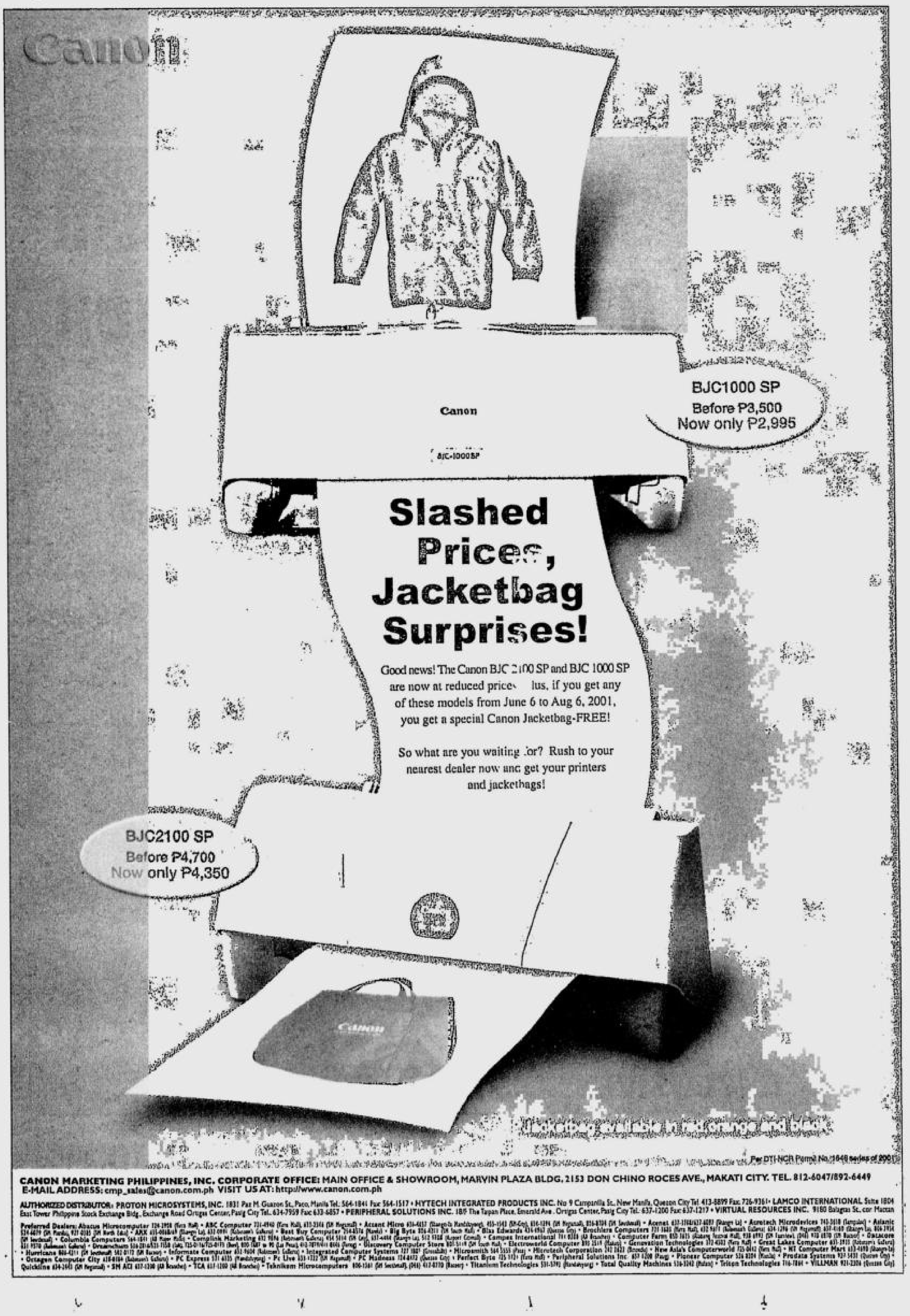

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Unilever sees 17% sales growth

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

ANGLO-DUTCH consumer products giant Unilever is projecting a mixed performance in sales this year as Filipinos are expected to step up their purchases of shampoo, soap and toiletries while sales of pasta and food condiments will remain flat.

Unilever Philippines Inc. general manager for corporate development Chito Macapagal told reporters that he expected sales of home and personal care products to increase by 16.7 percent to P14 billion this year from P12 billion.

Unilever's top brands in this category are Sunsilk shampoo, Creamsilk conditioner, Close-Up toothpaste, Rexona deodorant, Surf detergent powder, Pond's beauty products, Vaseline skin lotion, and Lifebuoy and Lux soap.

But Macapagal said Unilever has a dismal outlook for food products that are under the wings of California Marketing Corp., the local distributor of Best Foods brands. This includes Knorr food seasoning, Lady's Choice dressing, and Royal pasta.

Unilever expects sales of its food products to remain flat at P5 billion from last year. Before Unilever merged with the Best Foods group last year, the Anglo-Dutch firm's only food line is Lipton.

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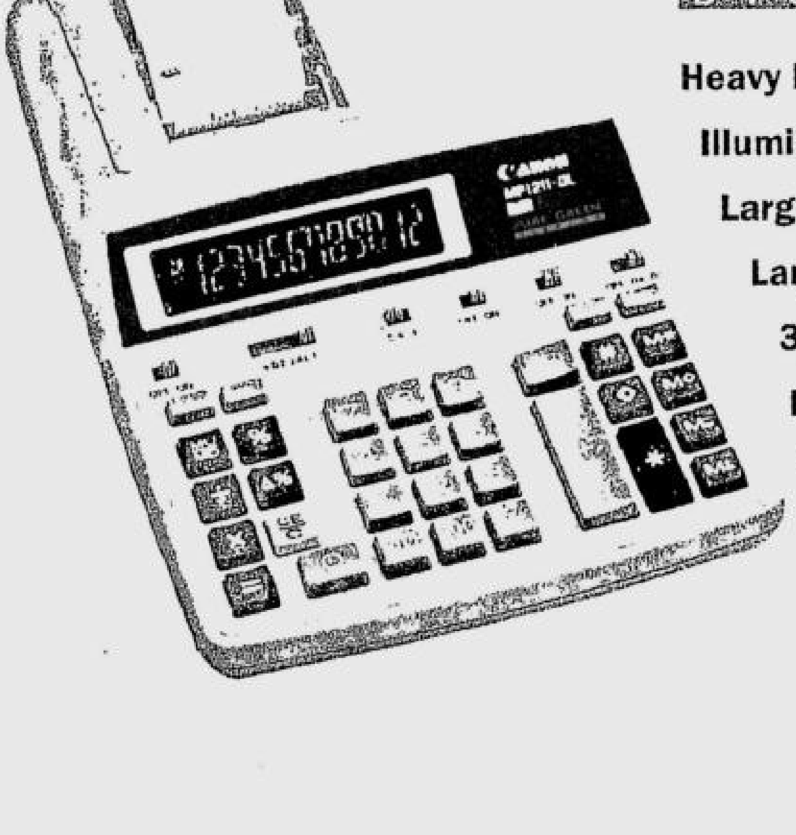

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(As of Tuesday, June 5, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	75.5	75.5	74	74.5	327,100
China Banking Corp.	650	650	650	650	2,490
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	40.5	40.5	39.5	39.5	34,200
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	220	220	215	217	320,080
Philippine National Bank	51.5	51.5	50	50	4,000
Security Bank Corp.	20	20	20	20	1,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	27	27.5	27	27.5	53,600
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
First Metro Invest. Corp.	231	248	231	248	400
Manulife Financial Corp.	1315	1315	1315	1315	2,180
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1105	1115	1105	1115	16,830
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	37.5	38.5	37	38	42,700
Diversified Fin. Network	8	9.3	8	9.3	5,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.39	0.39	1,630,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	660	670	660	670	300
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	200,000
Piltel	0.6	0.6	0.59	0.6	280,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	635	640	610	610	229,270
Ivantage Corp.	0.9	0.9	0.88	0.88	640,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.04	0.04	0.039	0.04	66,200,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	41	41	40	40	95,000
Manila Electric Co. B	59	59	55	55.5	659,000
Petron Corp.	2.06	2.28	2.06	2.28	24,115,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.85	2.85	2.85	2.8	12,493,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.46	0.46	0.46	0.46	200,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	30,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	370,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.16	1.2	1.16	1.2	5,401,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.14	2.14	2.14	2.14	1,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	4.05	4.1	4.05	4.05	738,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13	13	13	13	31,700
La Tondena Distillers Inc.	27.5	27.5	27	27.5	465,100
RFM Corp.	1.12	1.22	1.12	1.18	993,000
San Miguel Corp. A	41.5	41.5	41.5	41.5	68,000
San Miguel Corp. B	46.5	47	46.5	46.5	380,700
Vitarich Corp.	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	30,000
Ayala Corp.	7.3	7.3	7.3	7.3	1,022,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.26	260,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.64	1.7	1.64	1.66	4,211,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	11	11.25	10.75	10.75	2,000
Ajo Net Holdings Inc.	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79	50,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.55	0.6	0.55	0.58	2,980,000
APC Group. Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	120,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	1,000,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	12.5	12.5	10	12.25	1,300
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	80,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.48	1.52	1.44	1.48	1,630,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	510,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.14	0.14	1,030,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	1,750,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	280,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	10,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.08	1.12	1.08	1.12	777,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	24	24	23.75	24	325,500
Global Equities Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	520,000
Guoco Holdings (Phils.)	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	210,000
House of Investments Inc.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	80,000
Ionics Inc.	12	12	11.5	11.5	48,200
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.96	1.96	1.96	1.96	5,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.64	1.64	1.6	1.6	72,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.77	0.77	0.75	0.75	260,000
Magnum Holdings Inc	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	30,000
Multitech Inv. Corp	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	140,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.47	0.49	0.47	0.47	1,420,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	410,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.29	1,600,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Interphil Labs Inc. A	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	32,000
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.5	0.55	0.5	0.55	200,000
Music Corp.	2.12	2.34	2.12	2.32	859,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.89	0.9	0.89	0.9	60,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	15.75	16	15.75	16	84,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.48	0.49	0.48	0.48	1,030,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.52	0.54	0.51	0.51	2,610,000
Grand Plaza Hotel Corp.	18	18	18	18	5,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	50,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	37.5	38	36.5	37.5	61,200
Equitable PCI Bank-War	2.7	2.7	2.5	2.5	235,000
Globe Telecom Hldg (Pdr)	660	685	660	685	8,850
Macroasia Corp. Warrants	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	20,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	38,000,000
RFM Corp. - Pref.	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	70,000
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10	10	10	10	1,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10	10	10	10	1,000
Philweb.Com Inc. -Warrants	0.03	0.031	0.03	0.031	12,400,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.85	4.85	4.65	4.65	16,036,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	250,000
Cityland Development Corp.	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	10,000
C & P Homes Inc	0.35	0.35	0.32	0.32	3,900,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	200,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.32	2,200,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.1	2.22	2.1	2.22	9,971,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	100,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	1,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.5	1,283,000
Universal Rightfield Prop	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	100,000
MINING					
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2	2	2	2	25,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	4,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	160,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	80,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	58,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0044	0.0044	0.004	0.0042	15,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	12,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	70,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	290,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	200,000
OIL					
Interport Res.	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	8,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	5,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Mln. B	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	33,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	70,000
Pacifica	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	9,000,000
South China Resources Inc	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	20,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	10,000

DISCLOSURES

JOLLIBEE Foods Corp. is listing today 9,303 common shares under the company's tandem stock purchase and option plan.

* * *

ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp., through its wholly owned subsidiary **ABS-CBN Interactive Inc.**, signed a memorandum of agreement with **Yapster e-Trade Inc.** for an information swap.

* * *

UNIWIDE Holdings Inc. announced that the Securities and Exchange Commission has approved the partial implementation of the company's rehabilitation plan, particularly the dacion en pago transactions between the company and Metrobank, International Exchange Bank and United Coconut Planters Bank.

* * *

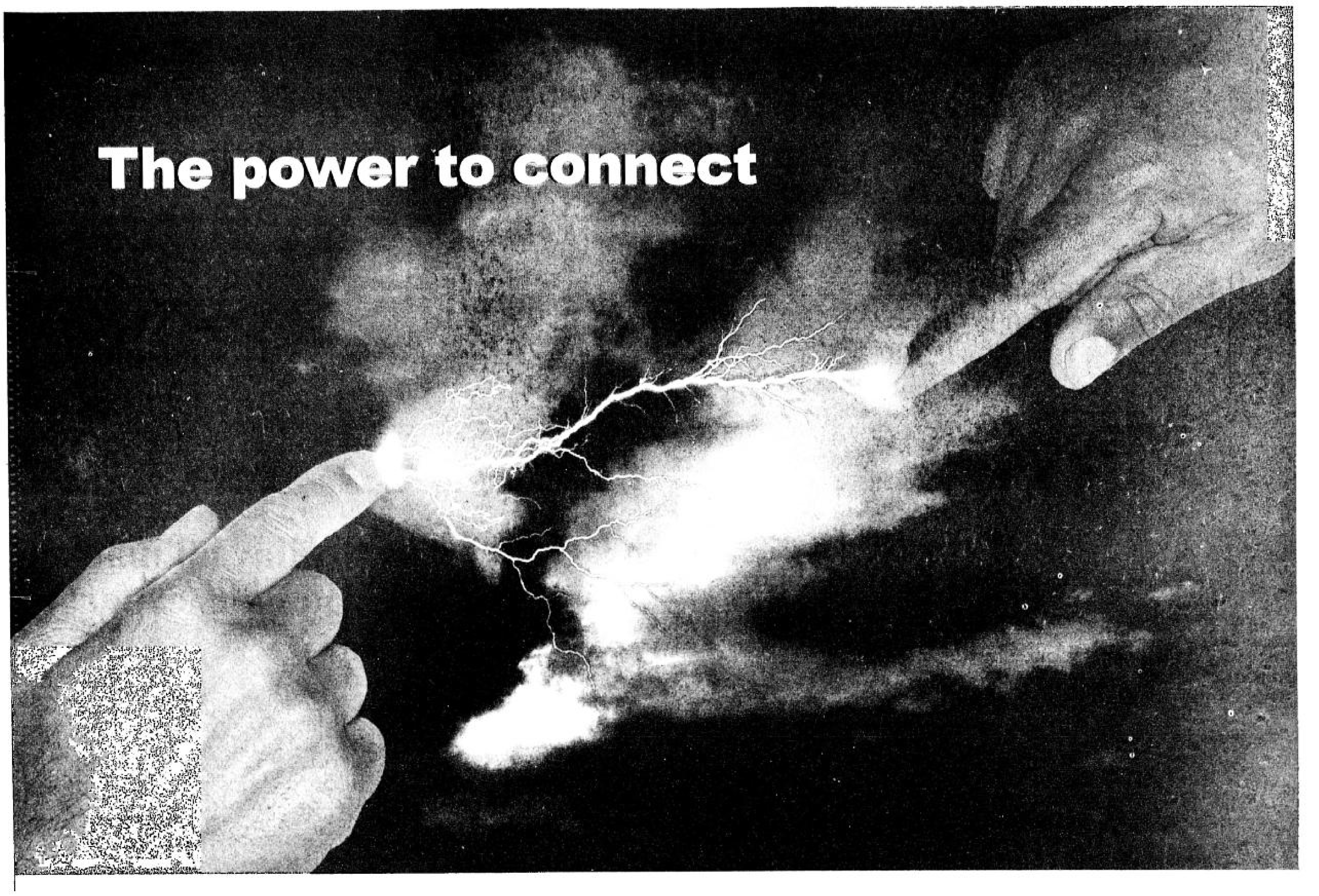
MATSUSHITA Electric Philippines Corp. has announced the resignation of Yoshikazu Tanaka as president and chair. Elected were the following: Eiji Iida, chair; Yukiharu Kubota, director and president, and Tsuneo Takahashi, director.

* * *

CITYLAND Development Corp. has declared a P0.095 per share cash dividend in favor of stockholders as of June 15. This will be payable on July 12.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Unionbank** were Justo Ortiz, Jon Ramon Aboitiz, Vicente Ayllon, Victor Valdepeñas, Erramon Aboitiz, Juan Antonio Bernad, Armand Braun Jr., Antonio Moraza, Stephen Paradies, Johnny Araneta, Jose Bernabe, Rafael Estrada, Raoul Inocentes, Juan Tan and Miguel Varela. *Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research*



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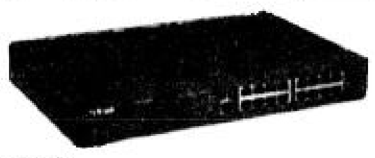

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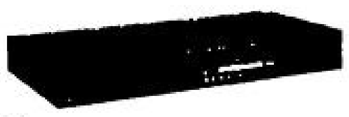

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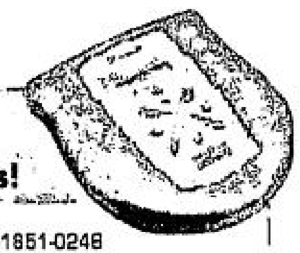

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- **DMP-CD 100** *5 out of 5 stars from Games First* (2001)
- **DMP-CD100** *8.5 out of 10 Rating In an Excellent Review from OnePC netNET* (28 February 2000)
- **DMP-CD100** *CNET Electronics Posts Excellent Review*
- **DSC-350** *Target PC Value Award* (27 August 2000)
- **DU-H3ETX** *Electric Tech Hot Product* (28 May 2000)
- **DU-H3ETX** *Hardware Zone Four Star* (27 June 2000)
- **DES-3225G** *Excellent rating of 7.95 out of 10 from Network World* (February 2001)
- **DES-1008D** *Hardware Masters Editor's Pick Award* (2000)
- **DWL-120** *PC Magazine Editor's Choice Award* (February 2001)
- **DWL-120** *Tech Extreme Editor's Choice Award* (5 March 2001)
- **DWL-120** *Aware Award from Aware Magazine* (2001)
- **DWL-series** *"Very Good" Rating Test Center Analysis in Info World* (February 2000)

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(Source: IDC Asia Pacific 2000)

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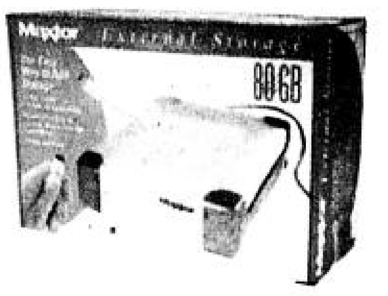

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FROM U.S. SLUMP

Asian economies to emerge fitter

SINGAPORE—Asian economies still struggling to recover from the 1997-1998 regional crisis while fighting the effects of the current US slowdown, will emerge stronger once the world's biggest economy recovers, according to Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew.

Despite weaknesses in the US technology sector, which has been the driver of Asian growth over the last decade, Lee voiced optimism for "further technological and productivity improvements" in the United States.

"These improvements will spread to other economies," Singapore's founding father and now senior minister said Monday night in a speech to the International Monetary Conference.

"Technology companies will recover as will global bourses," he said.

Structural reforms undertaken by Asian countries would put them in a strong position to benefit from the US recovery, Lee said.

"Asian stock markets, now severely undervalued by economic yardsticks, will rebound. The current mood of pessimism will disperse, and confidence in Asia's prospects will return," he said.

Lee said the current slump was unlikely to turn into a 1997-1998 style crisis that crippled the region's financial and banking system.

Apart from Indonesia, which was now paralyzed from domestic political instability, "other Southeast Asian countries have been able to strengthen their external position because of their strong savings," Lee said.

"By cutting back on excessive investments coupled with support from strong export growth, most countries have accumulated significant current account surpluses, rebuilt their foreign exchange reserves and cut their short-term debt," said Lee. *AFP*

Opec seeks to allay oil market fears after Iraq halts exports

VIENNA, Austria—With a vague pledge to keep world oil supplies flowing, Opec ministers have restored calm to jittery energy markets after Iraq sent prices soaring by suspending its exports of crude.

Members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries offered no details Monday about how they proposed to make up for Iraq's withdrawal from the market.

Yet it didn't seem to matter. Crude prices that had shot higher initially on the Iraqi announcement later lost those gains as it became apparent that Opec would not allow a shortfall to occur.

"Opec will manage the market, and I'm not concerned (about) any shortage," Iran's Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zangeneh told reporters in Vienna, where the group's representatives are to meet Tuesday to assess market conditions and set output targets.

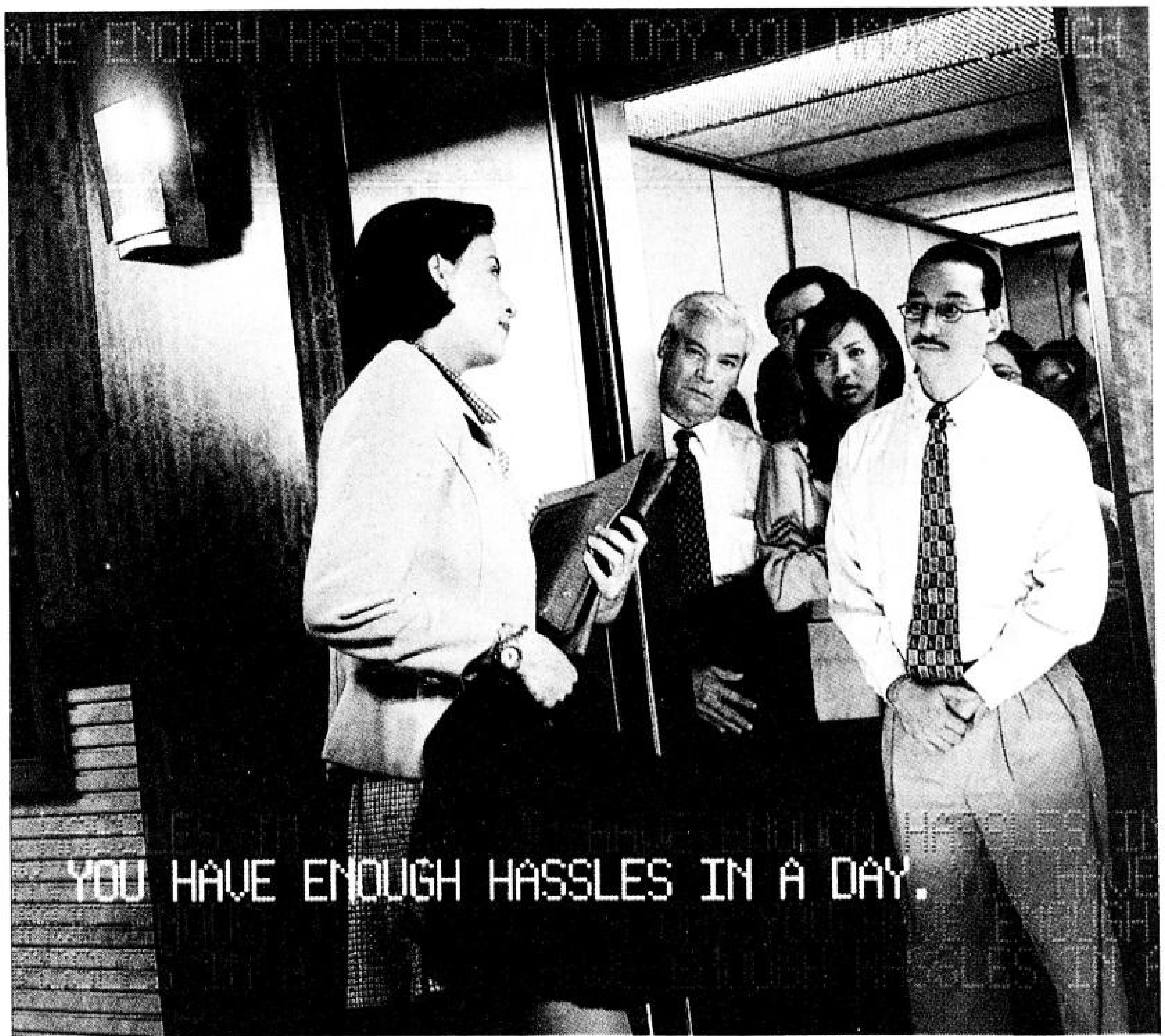
Opec is meeting as motorists in the United States are facing stiff prices at the pump, with motorists in some places paying more than $2 a gallon for gasoline. Opec says bottlenecks at US refineries are the cause of the high prices.

Some analysts said the worst of the summer's high gas prices may already be over.

"I personally think we're over the top," said Leo Drollas, chief economist of the Center for Global Energy Studies in London. He noted that US refineries were operating at 96 percent of capacity and that gasoline imports were flooding into the United States.

Still, the Iraqi government's suspension of its oil exports early Monday triggered a wave of panic buying of crude. July contracts of North Sea Brent crude leapt to a six-month high of $29.71 on the International Petroleum Exchange in London, before they fell back to $29.12, up 5 cents on the day. On the New York Mercantile Exchange, contracts of light sweet crude for July delivery peaked at $28.74 in early trading before slipping back to $28.34 in afternoon trading, up 41 cents.

Opec president Chakib Khelil took the lead in trying to reassure markets. *AP*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Japan to borrow $50B from private banks

TOKYO—Japan will borrow six trillion yen ($50.4 billion) from private banks to patch up a shortfall in local governments' revenue, an official said Tuesday

"The government will borrow around six trillion yen during the current fiscal year" ending March 2002, said Hideki Gohara, an official at the finance ministry.

"The purpose is to fill the budgetary gap in the revenues of local governments," Gohara said. "We like this scheme because it is easy and convenient with an interest rate of just 0.06 to 0.07 percent."

Governments usually raise money through issuing bonds but under a reform plan by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, issuance of Japanese government bonds has been capped at 30 trillion yen.

Therefore, the government must find alternative ways to borrow funds, analysts say.

"When the government does not have enough money they issue government bonds, the bulk of these bonds are bought by the banks so in a way they are already funding the government debt. This move (direct borrowing) is essentially the same thing," said BNP Paribas banking analyst Naoto Odagiri.

He said the government's plans to borrow from private lenders probably stem from the restriction on bond issuance.

"The 30-trillion yen limit is very difficult to achieve because each ministry has a budget and it is very hard to get them to reduce their respective budgets," he said.

It would be the second consecutive year Tokyo borrowed money from private lenders, after taking out eight trillion yen over the last 12 months to March to compensate for a financial shortfall in local governments, Gohara said.

"Through private borrowing, our financial supply to local governments became stable," he said.

"We will continue to take this measure because the financial situation in local governments is severe and it is not going to get better anytime soon," he said.

For the financial year to March 2001 Japan's local governments had a combined debt of 188 trillion yen. *AFP*

Australia, Singapore begin free-trade talks

SINGAPORE—Australia and Singapore began a third round of talks about a proposed free-trade agreement behind closed doors on Tuesday.

Last year, Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong and his Australian counterpart, John Howard, agreed to negotiate the free-trade pact by October 2001.

In February, the two nations signed an accord to recognize each others' product standards for a range of manufactured goods. The agreement—seen as a precursor to a free-trade pact—covers electrical, electronic and telecommunications equipment and medicinal products.

Singapore already has a free-trade agreement with New Zealand and is negotiating one with the United States. The city-state will begin free-trade talks with the European Free Trade Association—made up of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland—in Oslo on July 2.

For its part, Australia also is pursuing a free-trade agreement with Thailand after its bid to join the Asean Free Trade Area was blocked by Malaysia last year.

In Canberra, Australia, on Tuesday, Australian Trade Minister Mark Vaile said that while some outstanding issues remain, the free-trade talks between his country and Singapore are "going quite well" and the original target date to conclude them is still possible.

Vaile said he will meet his Singaporean counterpart, George Yeo, on Tuesday in Shanghai at a ministerial meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum. *AP*

Asian IT still vibrant, says Microsoft exec

By Abigail L. Ho

MICROSOFT Corp., the world's leading software provider, sees much promise in the Asian information technology industry despite the economic slowdown the region is experiencing.

"Business is growing faster than the overall economy, and corporate customers very much view IT as a critical imperative," Microsoft Asia Ltd. president Michael Rawding told the INQUIRER.

He said it was true that because of the economic slowdown, investments were not as high as when economies in Asia were healthier, "but they (corporations) still make investments because they need the investments."

In 1997, business went down for Microsoft Asia when the financial crisis hit the region, but "Asia has grown faster than other regions for the past two to three years," he said.

For fiscal year 2000, Microsoft Asia accounted for 18 percent of its parent firm's total revenue. Rawding believes this will still grow.

"Asia is underpenetrated in IT. Internet and PC penetration is lower than in Europe and the United States," he said.

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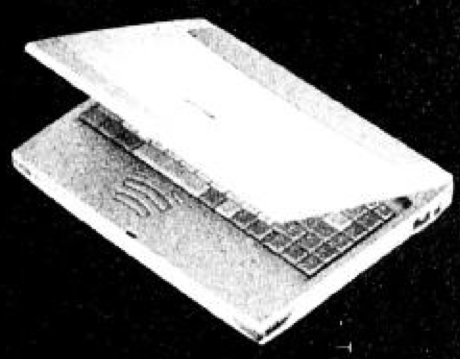

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Shaw Mand. 09177860463

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MARA PAWNSHOP BR. of 2202 M. Roxas corner Pedro Gil St., Sta Ana Manila. Auction Sale on June 12, 2001, Tuesday, at 2:30 in the afternoon Respectively, Jan. 10-Feb. 12,2001, Sons of J. Lanuza, Auctioneer.

MARA PAWNSHOP I, II, III, IV, and Comembo Branch of Makati City. Auction Sale on June 12, 2001, Tues. at 10:30, 11:30, 1:30, 12:30 and 8:30, in the morning and on the afternoon. Respectively, Jan. 10-Feb. 12, 2001. Sons of J. Lanuza, Auctioneer

MI MARA PAWNSHOP of 251 Quirino Ave. Baclaran Paranaque MM. Auction Sale on June 12, 2001 Tues. at 4:00 in the afternoon. Respectively, Jan. 10 - Feb. 12, 2001. Sons of J. Lanuza, Auctioneer.

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late MAXIMINO C. ANDAL JR. has been extra-judicially settled by his heirs on Jan. 6, 2001 under Doc.#909; Page#192; Book#11; Series of 2001 before Notary Public Atty. Douglas Santiago PDI-May 23, 30 & June 6, 2001

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SAMPLE ADS

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INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID

AD NO. PD 2001-30

*Bidding Date : June 27, 2001 - 10:00 a.m.

2001-29-01	WELDING ELECTRODES/SHAFTING BARS, various sizes
2001-29-02	CONSUMABLES FOR VARIOUS AUTOMATIC TIG WELDING MACHINES (Collet, Gas Cup, Wire Conduit/Nozzle, etc.) / FILLER WIRE, AWS ER-90S-B3
2001-29-03	INSULATION SHEET/BEARING, various sizes
2001-29-04	JIGSAW/HACKSAW BLADE/DRILL/VACUUM CLEANER (Industrial Type) /CABLE CUTTER
2001-29-05	MOULD COATING, Zircon Based / RESIN BINDER
2001-29-06	CUT-OFF WHEEL/ROLL-MAN CASTERS
2001-29-07	LIFE VEST, with Reflective Markings, Color yellow or orange
2001-29-08	COMPUTER, Desktop
2001-29-09	TIRES, tubeless, steel belted/radial tire, 185/195-R14, 8 ply
2001-29-10	SERVICES: Supply of Labor & Materials for the Repair/Improvement of Airconditioning Unit of Pajero SDJ 465
2001-29-11	SERVICES: Supply of Labor for the Machining of NPC Vehicles
2001-29-12	SERVICES: Job Order for Gear Cutting of Spur Gear, 68 teeth

Interested parties are invited to prequalify and to submit sealed bids on the above to be opened publicly at the Sampaguita Rm. Ground Floor, Bldg. 2, NPC-OBC, Quezon Ave. cor. Agham Rd., Diliman, Quezon City.

Accreditation forms can be obtained from Mondays thru Fridays at the Accreditation and Bidding Support Services, Materials Management Department, Ground Floor, Bldg. 2 upon payment of P50.00, submission of company's TIN and proof of listing at the Metro Manila telephone directory. *Deadline for submission of duly accomplished forms to participate in this bidding is on June 14, 2001.

Bidding documents available on June 8, 2001 upon payment of P50.00 which is non-refundable presentation of original Certificate of Accreditation and supplier's number (DCE). *Last day of issuance of bidding documents June 21, 2001.

Issuance of accreditation forms and bidding documents mornings only, 8:30 to 11:30 AM. For inquiries, please call no. 921-2574.

The Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation.

MATERIALS MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT
NPC-OBC (Head Office)
Diliman, Quezon City

(PDI - June 6 & 7, 2001)

Republic of the Philippines
SOCIAL SECURITY COMMISSION
Makati City

VICKY SORENO,
Petitioner,

- versus - SSC CASE NO. 9-14724-97

SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM and MILAGROS SORENO,
Respondents.
x -- x

NOTICE OF RESOLUTION ENTERED

TO : MILAGROS SORENO

GREETINGS:

Notice is hereby given that on the 2nd day of May, 2001 an **ORDER**, consisting of 2 pages, was entered in the above-mentioned case, which reads as follows:

> "Finding no merit in the Motion for Reconsideration filed by the petitioner, through counsel, on April 6, 2001, the same is hereby denied for lack of merit.
>
> SO ORDERED."

SOCIAL SECURITY COMMISSION

(PDI – June 6, 2001)

DBP Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines will receive sealed bids on 15 June 2001 at 2:00 p.m. at the Auditorium of the DBP Head Office, Sen. Gil J. Puyat Ave. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City for the following properties on CASH BASIS:

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	MINIMUM BID
REAL ESTATE			
METRO MANILA			
LRD-138	Loyola Grand Villas Subd., Barangka, Marikina City	1,320 m² residential lot (TCT No. 204465).	P 7,920,000.00
LTY-50	35 Sto. Niño St., Ma. Corazon Subd., Cupang, Antipolo City	520 m² two (2) parcels industrial/residential lots (TCT Nos.284045 and 284046) with two-storey office/factory buildings and one set cold storage freezer.	P 3,243,000.00
LTY-139	15 Sampaguita St., Tres Hermanas Subd., Mayamot, Antipolo City	330 m² residential lot (TCT No. N-58107) with one-storey building.	P 1,368,000.00
BULACAN			
MED-123	402 Bo. Tangos, Baliwag, Bulacan	240 m² residential lot (TCT No. T-128269) with building and improvements	P 456,100.00
PAMPANGA			
LDA-122	Sitio Teracan, Macabebe, Pampanga	87,656 m² lot utilized as fishpond (TCT No. 484782-R)	P 2,885,300.00
PANGASINAN			
VCP-90	Pagal District, San Carlos City	11,200 m² four (4) parcels of adjoining industrial lot (TCT Nos. 32082 to 32085) with buildings and improvements.	P 15,857,000.00

CHATTELS (Sale on "as-is, where-is" and per unit basis)

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	MINIMUM BID
VPI-60	EPZA, Rosario, Cavite	1 set Portable Concrete Batching Plant	P 594,000.00
VPI-62	La Campana Compound, EDSA, Balintawak, Q.C.	16 units of heavy equipment and vehicles.	P 8,100.00 to P 623,600.00/unit
VAB (69a-69o)	No. 428 10th Ave., East corner Kampupot St., Grace Park, Caloocan City	19 units of various machineries and equipment for manufacture of plastic wares and industrial items.	P 15,000.00 to P 560,000.00/unit
LJG-139a	La Campana Compound, EDSA, Balintawak, Q.C.	1 unit Tractor Head.	P 60,000.00
LJG-139b	La Campana Compound EDSA, Balintawak, Q.C.	1 unit 40-Footer Flat Bed Trailer	P 58,300.00

DBP RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY THEREIN, OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS AS MAY BE CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE BANK, THE DECISION OF THE BANK IS FINAL AND BINDING.

For inquiries, please call telephone numbers:

892-3836 or 818-9511 loc. 2128 for Code starting with L;
893-7172 or 818-9511 loc. 2144 for Code starting with V; and
893-7172 or 818-9511 loc. 2139 for Code starting with M.

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(PDI – June 5 & 6, 2001)

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The Philippine Tournament Bridge Association, Inc. (PTBA), a duly incorporated organization and existing under the laws of the Philippines, with address at 2178 Narra St., United Hills Village, Parañaque City, is currently applying for membership with the Philippine Olympic Committee (POC) to promote, develop and enhance the quality of bridge in the country.

The PTBA is the country's sole and legitimate bridge association and is recognized as such by the World Bridge Federation and the Pacific Asia Bridge Federation.

This notice is being published to inform any other sports body who claim to represent the same, and is thereby given a period of fifteen (15) days, commencing from today, to interpose their objection with the Membership Committee of the POC.

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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Trade and Industry
Bureau of Trade Regulation and Consumer Protection

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The public is hereby notified that there will be a public hearing on **Guidelines on Accreditation of Emission Testing Centers, Truck Rebuilding Centers and Release for Registration of Imported Used Motor Vehicles, Engines and Rebuilt Trucks pursuant to Sec. 21 (b) (3) and (d) of the Clean Air Act of 1999,** on June 7, 2001 at 1:30 p.m. at the CIAP-G/F, Jupiter St., Makati City.

For inquiry, please call Atty. Ruth Tan or Tina Perez at tel. nos. 8905261 or 8904943.

(PDI – June 6, 2001)

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OBITUARIES

In Loving Memory of

Our Dearly Beloved Mother

ENCARNACION TANA DIOSO

Has joined her loving husband Alfonso (†) peacefully rests in the infinite warmth and embrace of our Lord on May 26, 2001 at the age of 83 in Modesto, California.

Her loving children **Rosalind** and **Soto Tanpoco**, **Griselda** and **Aswero Manikan**, **Sergio** and **Ellen Dioso**, **Milrose** and **Dennes Tana**; grandchildren **Irene**, **Carrie**, **Al** (†), **Chiqui**, **James**, **Dennis** & **Sharon**, **Mia**, **Winston**, **Stefanie**, **Serge**, **Cherrie**; great grandsons **Alfonso** and **Sebastian**, brother and sisters-in-law, nephews and nieces, friends, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal rest of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the family residence in Makato, Aklan. Interment will be on June 9, 2001 after the Requiem Mass.

JOEL H. ALIVIADO

of Jolo, Sulu

peacefully joined his Creator on June 4, 2001 at the age of 43.

His bereaved wife **BETH**; children **MARK**, **MELVIN** & **MAYLAND**, **MOLLY**; grandchildren **MATRIX** & **MAURICE**; mother **LINDA**; brothers & sisters; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for his eternal happiness in heaven.

His remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be announced later.

Our Dearly Beloved

BEATRIZ CASTOR REYES Vda. de KABIGTING

of Candaba, Pampanga and Las Piñas City, Metro Manila

Peacefully joined our Lord on June 4, 2001 at the age of 98.

Her loving children **Eva**, **Veneranda**, **Oscar**, **Amelia** (deceased), **Raul**, **Claro** (deceased), **Genie** and **Tessie**; daughters, and sons-in-law, grandchildren and great grandchildren request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the St. Andrew Chapel, Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, Dr. A. Santos Ave., Parañaque City.

Interment will be on June 10, 2001 after the 7:00 a.m. Holy Mass at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat Road, Parañaque City, Metro Manila

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"Tatay, your presence will be deeply missed, but the memories of your love and goodness will live with us and remain in our hearts forever..."

Our Dearly Beloved Father

MANUEL FRANCISCO CRUZ

of Sulucan, Angat, Bulacan and Caloocan City

Died in the Grace of our Lord on June 4, 2001 at the age of 85.

His bereaved wife **MARTINIANA**; children **Milagros** (†), **Manuel Jr.**, **Alfonso**, **Rodolfo**, **Teresita**, **Irma** (†), **Edwin** and **Felipe**, sons- and daughters-in-law **Rodrigo**, **Rosario**, **Evelyn**, **Eloisa**, **Joselito**, **Col. R. Flores**, **Marcy** (†) and **Isany**; brothers **Jose** (†), **Eugenio** (†), **Felipe (FF)** and **Efren**; sisters **Emerenciana** (†), **Maria** (†) and **Cristeta** (†). His sisters-in-law, grandchildren, great grandchildren, nephews, nieces and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Mt. Carmel Chapel, Doña Juana Rodriguez Street, Broadway, New Manila, Quezon City.

Funeral entourage will leave for Sulucan, Angat, Bulacan Chapel at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 7, 2001. Mass will be held on Saturday, June 9, 2001 at 2:00 p.m. at Sulucan Chapel. Interment will follow at *Himlayan ng Lahi*.

"Our bodies will return to the dust of the earth, and the breath of life will go back to God, who gave it to us."
Eccl. 12:7

The management and staff of
TRANSPORT EQUIPMENT CORPORATION
mourn with deep sorrow the demise of

VIVIENNE GONZALEZ DATU

Director-Marketing and Sales Control Division

who entered the Kingdom of God on Monday, June 4, 2001.

We request everyone to please pray for the eternal repose of her soul. Her body lies in state at Chapel I, Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City. Interment will be announced later.

Marita Ubaldo Marasigan

*Widow of the late **Atty. Francisco (Paquito) V. Marasigan** joined our Lord on June 4, 2001.*

Her bereaved children, **Rose Marie** and **Gil** (†) **Favis**, **Nanes** and **Gene Ramos**, **Tonton** and **Bert Carandang**, **Marie Tess** (†), **Rico** (†), **Darna** and **Jorge Benavides**, **Frederick** and **Gidget Marasigan**, **Dodie** and **Lyna Marasigan**, and **Nenita De La Cruz**; grandchildren, **Billy** and **Aida**, **Becky**, **Popot** and **Douglas**, **Binky** and **Ella**, **Marotte**, **Kevin**; **Jayvee**, **Donna**, **Charley**, **Joyce**, **Camille**; **Nikko**, **Eric** and **Lisa**; **Jayjay**, **Angeline**, **Bicbic** and **Chelor**; **Franco**, **Andre'**; **Isobel**; **Aries**; great grandchildren **Melissa**, **Colleen**, **Patrick**; **Nicolo**, **Joshua**; **Kitoy**, **Karlo**; **Bea**; **Manoli** and other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at St. Alphonsus Mary de Ligouri Chapel, Magallanes Village, Makati City.

Interment will be at the Loyola Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City after the 8:00 A.M. Mass at the Magallanes Church.

The Board of Directors, Management and Staff
of
Republic Aggregates Company, Inc.

Express its deepest sympathy to the family
of our founding Director

MANUEL FRANCISCO CRUZ

His remains lie in state at Mt. Carmel Chapel,
Doña Juana Rodriguez Street, Broadway,
New Manila, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, June 09, 2001
at *Himlayan ng Lahi*, Sulucan, Bulacan.

"I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours."
John 17:9

GLORIA SALITA DUMUK

Passed away on May 29, 2001 at the age of 76 in New Jersey, U.S.A.

Her beloved children **TERESITA**, **ROMEO JR.**, **JULIETA**, **MA. LUISA**, **RICARDO**, **RAMON**, **ROGELIO**, **MA. VICTORIA**, **MA. GLORIA**; children-in-law, grandchildren and great grandchildren request relatives and friends to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Patalinghug Funeral Homes, Cabaguis Ave., Davao City.

Interment will be on Thursday, June 7, 2001 at Davao Memorial Park after the 8 a.m. Mass at the Assumption Parish Church, Torres St., Davao City.

So deeply missed, so deeply remembered.

"To Thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul."

In Loving Memory
on the Tenth Death Anniversary of

Antonio C. Palacios, Sr., M.D. C.P.H.

who joined his Creator on June 6, 1991

Holy Masses are being offered today, June 6, 2001
at the following churches

Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, Batangas City
San Pascual Baylon Parish Church, San Pascual, Batangas
St. Michael Archangel Parish, Lobo, Batangas
Our Lady Queen of Mercy Parish, Taysan, Batangas
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church, Lipa City
Monastery of St. Benedict, P. Olan, Lipa City
Basilica of San Sebastian, Plazol del Carmen, Quiapo, Manila
National Shrine of the Sacred Heart,
San Antonio Village, Makati City
Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, Pagsanjan, Laguna
Adoration Convent of Divine Mercy,
Brgy. Mantim, Tagaytay City
Shrine of Our Lady of Manaoag, Manaoag, Pangasinan City
Sto. Niño de Paz Community, Greenbelt Chapel,
Ayala Center, Makati City

Naomi Balagot Dumuk

of Bauang, La Union

wife of the late *Mariano B. Dumuk*

Died in the Grace of our Lord on June 4, 2001 at the age of 84.

She is survived by her beloved children **Edmund** and **Rebecca**, **Roxana** and **Dani**, **Melinda** and **Roberto**, **Lanny** and **Rose**, **Emmeline** and **Guido**; grandchildren and great grandchildren.
Her remains lie in state at the B. Baker Memorial Chapel Fairfield, California.
Interment will be announced later.

"Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you."
Isaiah 60:1

ENGR. LUCIANO D. OCAMPO, JR.

Peacefully joined his Creator on June 3, 2001 at the age of 71

His beloved wife Josefina; his loving children and in-laws Maribel and Tino, Virginia and Bob, Levy Antonio and Jyna; grandchildren Michelle, Michael, Bobie and Maesa; great grandchild Mimi, sisters Naty, Cion and Auring; brothers Tony, Maning Danny and Andy.

His remains lie in state at CEBU ROLLING HILLS MEMORIAL PRESIDENTIAL CHAPELS at A.S. Fortuna St., Banilad Mandaue City. There will be two services daily at 8:00 PM and 9:00 PM.

Interment will be on Saturday, June 9, 2001 at Mandaue Municipal Cemetery after the Holy Mass at 2:00 p.m. at CEBU ROLLING HILLS PRESIDENTIAL CHAPELS (Emmanuel 1).

"We know that God raised the Lord Jesus from death. He will raise us to life with Jesus. He will present us, along with you, to God."
2 Corinthians 4:14

FIRST YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

People at Work celebrates careers, learning

CAREER Tales writer Cècile Garcia

EMCEE Chito San Mateo

BY ROCHE LEONOR

IT was a weeklong celebration filled with fun and inspiration. Readers flocked to the People at Work Live! Seminar Series and inspirational careers were recognized during the first year anniversary celebration of People at Work.

People at Work formally ended a weeklong anniversary celebration by giving the "Career Tale of the Year" award in ceremonies held at the 3rd floor lobby of the Philippine Daily Inquirer office.

The story "Numbers are no obstacle to young math whiz" was this year's choice for "Career Tale of the Year." Rex Noda, who was the subject of the article, was overcome with joy. Noda expressed his surprise in having his story recognized as the most inspiring career tale of the year. He is a 22-year-old graduate of the City College of Manila and has authored six math review books. The breadwinner of his family, he is currently working as project editor and team leader for Diwa Publishing. He was recognized for his efforts to rise above poverty and make the best of his knowledge.

The other stories nominated for the award were those of TV/radio broadcaster Mike Enriquez, lawyer Vicky Avena, Solicitor General Simeon Marcelo, parenting trainer Irma Persela, firefighter Kimberly Tan, Enchanted Kingdom employee Sidney Uy, working couple Enteng and Marissa Romano, innovative marketing whiz Raffy David, alternative healer/nurse Mia Millare, and breast cancer survivor Corazon Cenon.

The cocktails/awarding ceremony formally closed the first year anniversary celebration of People at Work.

Among the activities that marked the anniversary was a three-day training seminar conducted at the Asian Institute of Management from May 29-31 by People at Work writers.

On the first day, columnist Moje Ramos-Aquino conducted a seminar entitled "Assertiveness in Communication." Attended by more than 400 participants, Aquino discussed the difference between being submissive, aggressive and assertive. She also gave tips to the audience on how to be more assertive in the workplace. Due to overwhelming public demand, this seminar may have a second run soon to accommodate all those who missed attending it due to lack of space.

On May 30, writer Ernie Cecilia gave an inspiring talk on "Values of the Global Pinoy." Attended by more than 200 people, Cecilia discussed the necessary traits that an employee needs to keep up and get ahead in the global age. Among these traits are tolerance to ambiguity, multiskilling and being "techno-crazy." He also discussed the changes in doing business and the emerging landscape of the workplace.

On the third day, consultants from the Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting gave a seminar entitled "Effective Coaching Skills" to more than 300 managers and supervisors. Headed by Agnes Santos and Tizza Robel-Zamora, Ancilla consultants discussed the frequent problems that employees and managers encounter in the workplace in a question-and-answer format. Tips were also given on how to effectively coach one's staff and how to properly receive coaching.

During the various activities, a video presentation was shown, chronicling the journey of People at Work from day one to year one. INQUIRER editor-in-chief, Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc, commended People at Work editor Regina Reyes for "relentlessly, enthusiastically, and persistently" pursuing the idea of coming out with a section that caters to the working people. Senior Vice President for Corporate Services Dave O. Valdes praised the section for being the first of its kind in the media industry.

CAREER Tale of the Year: Numbers are no obstacle to young math whiz, Rex Noda.

WRITER Ernie Cecilia and SVP-Marketing Rene Reinoso

PEOPLE at WORK
CAREER TALE OF THE YEAR

SUCCESSFUL career people with People at Work team. From left are Raffy David, Vicky Avena, Irma Persela, Sidney Uy, Simeon Marcelo, Mar de los Reyes, Josie Santamaria, Ernie Cecilia, Rex Noda, Cecile Garcia, the author and Regina Reyes.

PEOPLE at WORK
CAREER TALE OF THE YEAR

WRITER and subject of "Career Tale of the Year" with PDI Chair Marixi Prieto and president Sandy Romualdez.

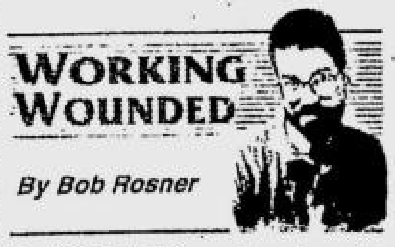
SPONSOR Philamlife's staff

RESOURCE person Moje Ramos-Aquino with would-be assertive communicators.

STANDING room only at the People at Work Live! Seminar Series at the Asian Institute of Management.

PHOTOS BY JESS YUSON, BETUY JOHNSON AND HAZEL SORIAGA

How do you stay connected to your kids when you travel for work?



WORKING WOUNDED

By Bob Rosner

DEAR WW: I've never had to travel more than two days a month for work. But recently I've been gone almost every week. I've got two small kids and I feel guilty each time I leave. Short of quitting my job, is there anything I can do?

Hit the Road Jack

It was on landing in Detroit once that I discovered there's something even worse than having the airline lose your luggage. It's learning that yours was the last flight in for the evening and that the earliest you'll see your bag is two hours after your big presentation. "But don't worry," the baggage agent confided to me. "One time they lost my husband's bag and he made a presentation to a room full of CEOs in his shorts." As I looked down at what was now my entire Detroit wardrobe—the ratty sweats I was wearing—I realized that suitcases are just the first of a series of things a business traveler can lose on the road.

Of course, clients and contracts are often lost, even without the aid of airline baggage handlers. But the road's really big loss is that connection to your family. Being a daddy or mommy is tough enough without trying to parent via cell phone, while sliding across the back seat of a taxi in a strange city. So looking for creative strategies for staying in touch, I turned to Jim Levine, author of "Working Fathers" (Addison Wesley, 1997). He suggested asking yourself the following questions:

1. Can you start preparing your kids for your trip before you leave?

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Graduate regrets poor...

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(Ms Puangco is CEO and president of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting, a full service management consulting firm. Send feedback or requests for advice through e-mail to ancillaedc@pacific.net.ph *or through fax to tel. no. 892-2902.)*

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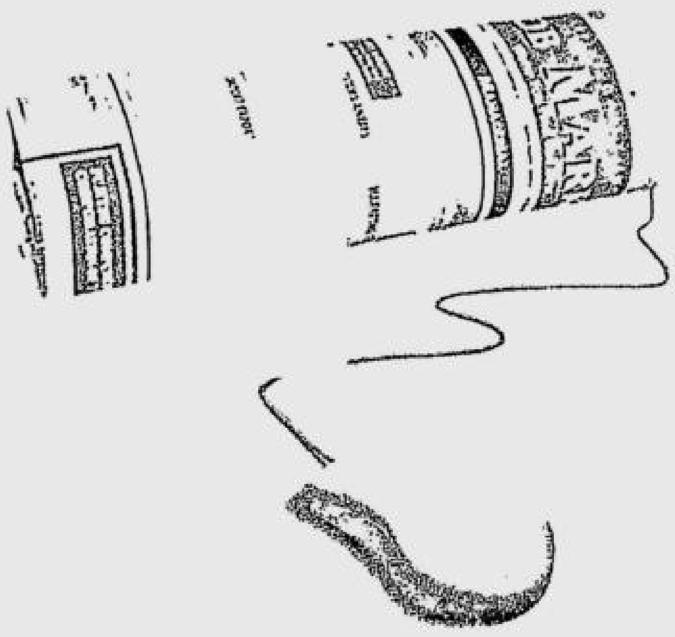

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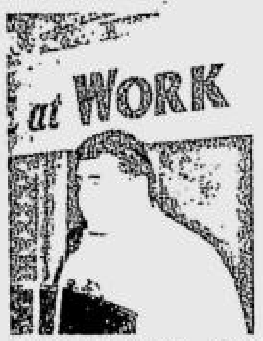
FIRST YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

People at Work celebrates careers, learning

CAREER Tales writer Cecile Garcia



EMCEE Chito San Mateo

By Roche Leonor

IT was a weeklong celebration filled with fun and inspiration. Readers flocked to the People at Work Live! Seminar Series and inspirational careers were recognized during the first year anniversary celebration of People at Work.

People at Work formally ended a weeklong anniversary celebration by giving the "Career Tale of the Year" award in ceremonies held at the 3rd floor lobby of the Philippine Daily Inquirer office.

The story "Numbers are no obstacle to young math whiz" was this year's choice for "Career Tale of the Year." Rex Noda, who was the subject of the article, was overcome with joy. Noda expressed his surprise in having his story recognized as the most inspiring career tale of the year. He is a 22-year-old graduate of the City College of Manila and has authored six math review books The breadwinner of his family, he is currently working as project editor and team leader for Diwa Publishing. He was recognized for his efforts to rise above poverty and make the best of his knowledge.

The other stories nominated for the award were those of TV/radio broadcaster Mike Enriquez, lawyer Vicky Avena, Solicitor General Simeon Marcelo, parenting trainer Irma Persela, firefighter Kimberly Tan, Enchanted Kingdom employee Sidney Uy, working couple Enteng and Marissa Romano, innovative marketing whiz Raffy David, alternative healer/nurse Mia Millare, and breast cancer survivor Corazon Cenon.

The cocktails/awarding ceremony formally closed the first year anniversary celebration of People at Work.

Among the activities that marked the anniversary was a three-day training seminar conducted at the Asian Institute of Management from May 29-31 by People at Work writers.

On the first day, columnist Moje Ramos-Aquino conducted a seminar entitled "Assertiveness in Communication." Attended by more than 400 participants, Aquino discussed the difference between being submissive, aggressive and assertive. She also gave tips to the audience on how to be more assertive in the workplace. Due to overwhelming public demand, this seminar may have a second run soon to accommodate all those who missed attending it due to lack of space.

On May 30, writer Ernie Cecilia gave an inspiring talk on "Values of the Global Pinoy." Attended by more than 200 people, Cecilia discussed the necessary traits that an employee needs to keep up and get ahead in the global age Among these traits are tolerance to ambiguity, multi-skilling and being "techno-crazy." He also discussed the changes in doing business and the emerging landscape of the workplace

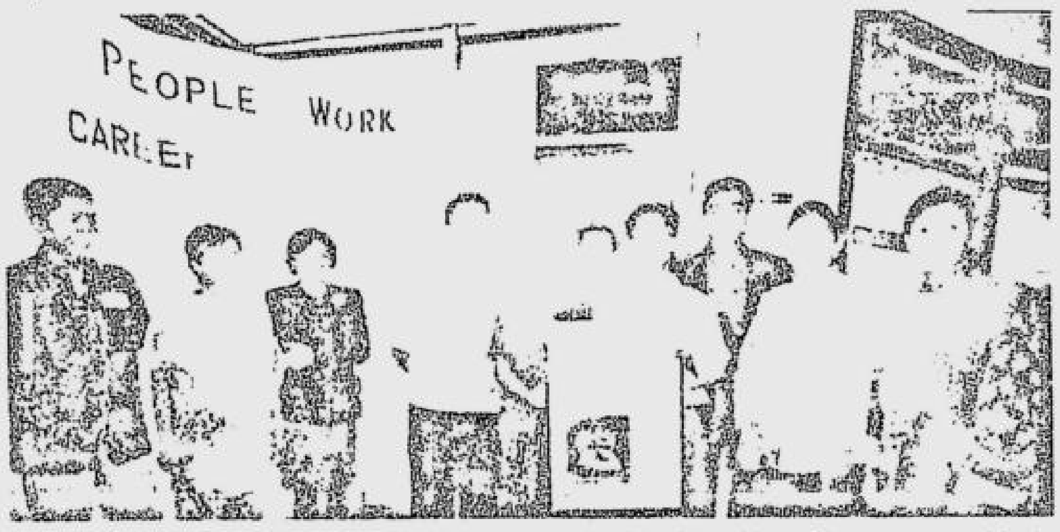
On the third day consultants from the Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting gave a seminar entitled "Effective Coaching Skills" to more than 300 managers and supervisors. Headed by Agnes Santos and Tizza Robel-Zamora, Ancilla consultants discussed the frequent problems that employees and managers encounter in the workplace in a question-and-answer format Tips were also given on how to effectively coach one's staff and how to properly receive coaching

During the various activities, a video presentation was shown, chronicling the journey of People at Work from day one to year one. Inquirer editor-in-chief, Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc, commended People at Work editor Regina Reyes for "relentlessly, enthusiastically, and persistently" pursuing the idea of coming out with a section that caters to the working people Senior Vice President for Corporate Services Dave O. Valdes praised the section for being the first of its kind in the media industry

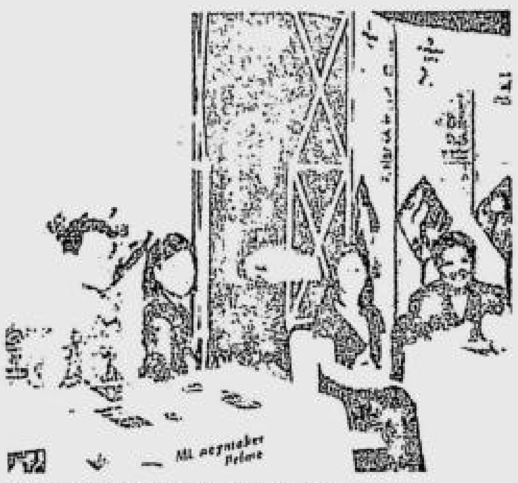
CAREER Tale of the Year: Numbers are no obstacle to young math whiz, Rex Noda

WRITER Ernie Cecilia and SVP-Marketing Rene Reinoso

SUCCESSFUL career people with People at Work team From left are Raffy David, Vicky Avena, Irma Persela, Sidney Uy, Simeon Marcelo, Mar de los Reyes, Josie Santamaria, Ernie Cecilia, Rex Noda, Cecile Garcia, the author and Regina Reyes.

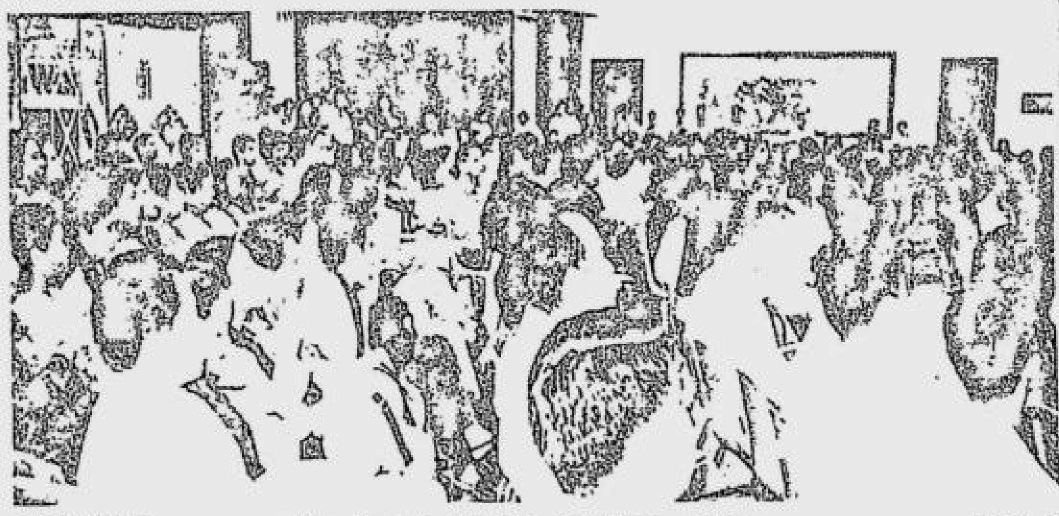


WRITER and subject of "Caree: Tale of the Year with PDI Chair Ma [illegible] P [illegible] sident Sandy Romualdez



SPONSOR Philamlife's staff

RESOURCE person Moje Ramos-Aquino with would-be assertive communicators.



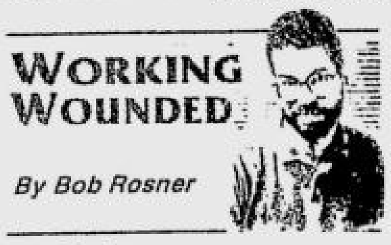
STANDING [illegible] at the People at Work [illegible]ive! Sem[illegible] Seri[illegible] [illegible]titute [illegible] Manager[illegible]

PHOTOS BY [illegible] AND HAZEL [illegible]RIAGA

How do you stay connected to your kids when you travel for work?

DEAR WW: I've never had to travel more than two days a month for work. But recently I've been gone almost every week. I've got two small kids and I feel guilty each time I leave. Short of quitting my job, is there anything I can do?

Hit the Road Jack



WORKING WOUNDED

By Bob Rosner

It was on landing in Detroit once that I discovered there's something even worse than having the airline lose your luggage It's learning that yours was the last flight in for the evening and that the earliest you'll see your bag is two hours after your big presentation. "But don't worry," the baggage agent confided to me. "One time they lost my husband's bag and he made a presentation to a room full of CEOs in his shorts." As I looked down at what was now my entire Detroit wardrobe—the ratty sweats I was wearing —I realized that suitcases are just the first of a series of things a business traveler can lose on the road.

Of course, clients and contracts are often lost, even without the aid of airline baggage handlers. But the road's really big loss is that connection to your family. Being a daddy or mommy is tough enough without trying to parent via cell phone, while sliding across the back seat of a taxi in a strange city. So looking for creative strategies for staying in touch, I turned to Jim Levine, author of "Working Fathers" (Addison Wesley, 1997). He suggested asking yourself the following questions:

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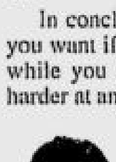

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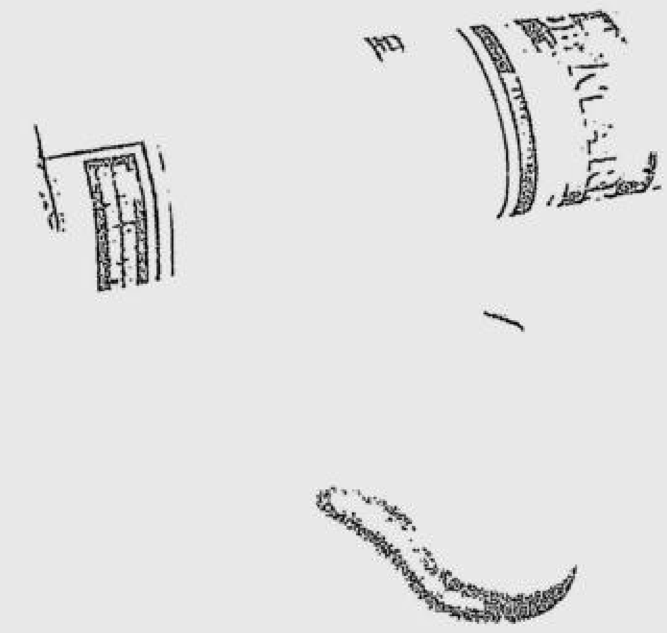

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PEOPLE at WORK

RAUL O. MARCELO, Editor ■ REGINA GALANG REYES, Subsection Editor

Graduate regrets poor school performance

BY TITA DATU PUANGCO

Advice
FOR THE
ANXIOUS PERSON
AT WORK

I AM a new college graduate from a reputable school. However, my credentials and my transcript of records are not exactly résumé material. I'm ashamed of my transcript of records for I have so many failures due to absences ever since I was a freshman in college. Before, I didn't exactly believe in the importance of going to school.

The good news is I've learned the value of education and the need to exploit opportunities. I regret my college experiences and records a lot. I've had two work experiences, one part-time and another on-the-job. I admit I did well on both counts. My evaluation forms were very good and I'm very proud of my performance. I believe that they reflect the real me. One wouldn't think that I had failures in school. I believe I've done my best in my part-time job, too.

What worries me is my college history. I know this will be a great drawback for me when it comes to job applications. Just like any potential suitor, the companies who would read my transcript would definitely get turned off. I really want to prove to myself that I'm not that irresponsible, immature girl anymore. Rather, I'm a grownup, goal-oriented and responsible woman.

Do you think I still have a chance to get a decent job or the job that I really like (communication, broadcasting, media production, and publishing)? Hope you can help me in this matter. Thank you for your time. More power and God bless.

Renewed Person

I can empathize with your situation. I think it can serve as a lesson for students in college, who do not take their courses seriously. We live in the information age so a person who does not try to learn as quickly and as much as he can, in school or even outside of school, would be greatly disadvantaged.

There are effective interviewing techniques you may wish to master

from the ghost of college past...
TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDS
RESUME

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

But the good news is knowledge is expanding at such a rapid pace. An author said that if you don't keep updated while at work, in two to three years, what you learned in school may be obsolete. What's exciting about the present environment is the multiple opportunities and sources of learning that are within our fingertips. These are the Web, television, specialized magazines, etc. These are all beyond school.

Multiple intelligences

So, a poor transcript of records may not exactly tell the whole story. Employers are now familiar with the concept of multiple intelligences. Success inside the classroom may not exactly spell out in terms of success in real life. In fact, research shows that often, emotional intelligence may be more important than IQ in determining work success.

I remember a classmate of mine at AIM, who said, "Those who graduate at the top of the class become professors, those who graduate at the upper 30 percent get good jobs in big corporations, and the mediocre become entrepreneurs. Then, they hire professors to be their consultants and professionals to manage their companies." It may sound funny but there may be a grain of truth here.

What is critical is for you to prove yourself well at the interview stage even before your future employers get to your resume. There are effective interviewing techniques you may wish to master. I would also advise role playing and practicing the interview process. Think specially of those weak areas in your resume, and give honest yet insightful explanations for your failing grades.

You are asking if you can land a job in your preferred areas. You may have to source well the opportunities. You can begin by asking your network of friends or looking at classified ads. You can also do a matching of your strengths and the demands of the job. The beauty about life is if you make a mistake in terms of a chosen career, then, you can always change jobs or create your own job.

Artful work

The important part is doing an excellent job when you find the work you like. One of my favorite books on work is entitled "Artful Work" by Dick Richards. He says that the tragedy of our times is that we have separated art from work. We see art as the "expression of what is true, good and beautiful" while work refers to "tasks that are part of a job." He says during the early days, pride was in doing artful work.

He relates a number of principles. Every work, whether simple or complex, is a work of art. The reward for perfect work is in the process and in the doing. The result of perfect work is joy. Artful work requires putting one's heart, mind and spirit into it. As the art creates the artist, the artist creates the work. The author continues to say that each of us is an artist in our own special way, no matter what work we do. A masterpiece results when we put all our physical, mental, emotional and spiritual energies into what we are doing at the moment.

Do you want to take the test for artful work? If you answer yes to the next four questions, then you must be producing masterpieces at work. One, do you care about the work itself? If you commit yourself to your work, then you care deeply about it. Two, can you express yourself through your work? Self-expression means expressing oneself as a person, one's ideas, feelings, spiritual longings or beliefs. Three, are you committed to the meaning of the work? If you believe that your work can make the world better, then, you will do your best. Four, are you tenacious enough to do the work well? If you want to perfect your work, the key is to practice.

Collaboration

The other thing to remember if you land a job is the power of collaboration. Gone are the days when superstars dominate the workplace. Today everyone can be a superstar in the context of the team. Edward M. Marshall, author of "Transforming the Way We Work," explains collaboration. He notes that collaboration is the premier candidate to replace hierarchy as the organizing principle in the 21st workplace.

It is a principle-based process of working together, which produces trust, integrity and breakthrough results by building true consensus, ownership and alignment in all aspects of the organization. What characterizes collaboration? First, it is a total shift in the way we work together, think about our customers and behave towards one another in the workplace. It provides long term stability for the workplace because it is a work ethic that recognizes that work gets done through people, that people want and need to be valued, that any change needs to be owned by those implementing it to be successful.

Collaboration provides the common denomi-

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LIFESTYLE

CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor ▪ PAM PASTOR, Chief of Correspondents

Westlife, the voice of 'Ally McBeal,' urban adventure, Po Na Na, atbp.

NICKY
SHANE
KIAN
BRYAN
MARK

This week we begin 2bU!'s once-a-month hodgepodge issue. No limits, no boundaries—anything goes

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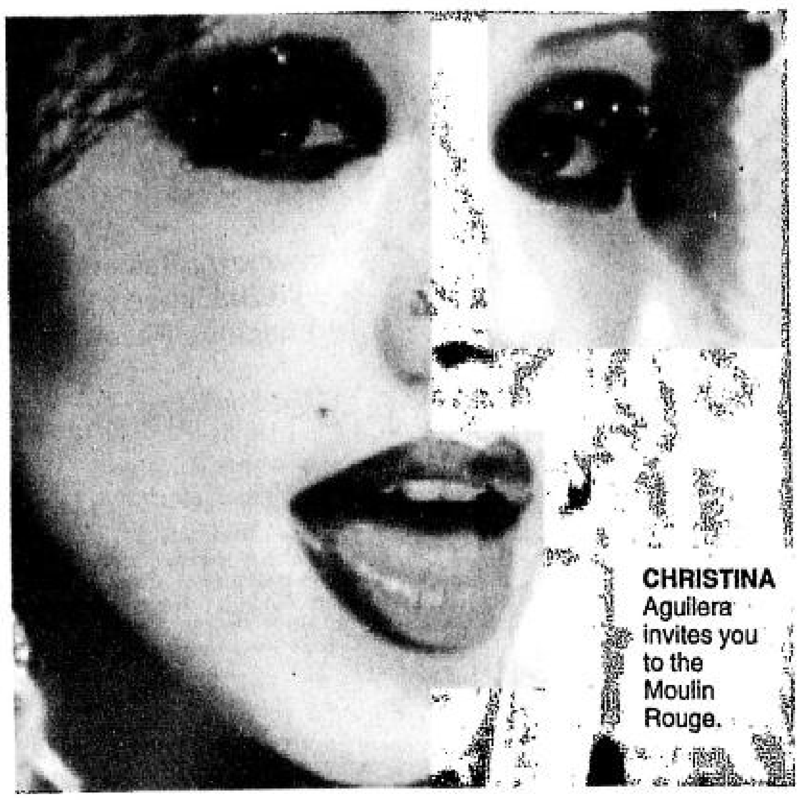
Music video reviews plus thought balloons



CHRISTINA Aguilera invites you to the Moulin Rouge.

By Niño Mark M. Sablan

"IN MY Pocket" (Mandy Moore)

Mandy's back with a disappointing single trying so hard to pass itself as a hot Latin dance track. Surrounded by Asians spinning plates, balancing jars and playing with balls of fire, she looks boring in an asymmetrical orange top with ruffles and an alien because of her funny hair.

Inside my thought balloon: I want my old Mandy back.

"Summer of Love" (Steps)

Steps' follow-up to "It's the Way That You Make Me Feel" is yet another Latin-flavored song that brings back the ghost of Irene Cara. The video is reminiscent of a "That's Entertainment" Saturday showdown edition between a group clad in black and another dressed in bright, colorful clothes (aquamarine, tangerine and the like), the latter reminiscent of the "Come on Over" video, with Faye resembling Christina.

Inside my thought balloon: I want my "That's" back.

"Nothing I Want More" (Sharon Cuneta)

A video with superb lighting, it features video snippets of Ate Shawie, her wedding with Kiko plus KC and Frankie cameos.

Inside my thought balloon: Wow, a music video and a family photo album in one! Where's Gabby? I want to watch "Dear Heart" for the nth time.

"This Is Me" (Dream)

Puff Daddy's latest pets are back with a song similar to their debut single. The first part of the video features the girls in girly clothes and rooms you'd think you're watching FTV and IDTV (Interior Design TV, not that there is actually one). The second segment displays the girls' dancing capabilities amid walls of graffiti and thrasher dudes. The last leg is a faux performance, the girls singing (and dancing) without microphones.

Inside my thought balloon: Hmmm... visually bearable. Oh, my God, I'm grooving!

"Sing" (Travis)

The new album is called "The Invisible Band" and in the "Sing" video, there is a monkey, a dead octopus momentarily displayed in the air in slow-mo and lots of food flying. Fran Healy looks like a baby vulture in a suit.

Inside my thought balloon: That Fran is one cute baby vulture. Throw in Michael Jackson's pets plus Dumbo, and we have a mini-zoo.

"Lullaby" (Melanie B)

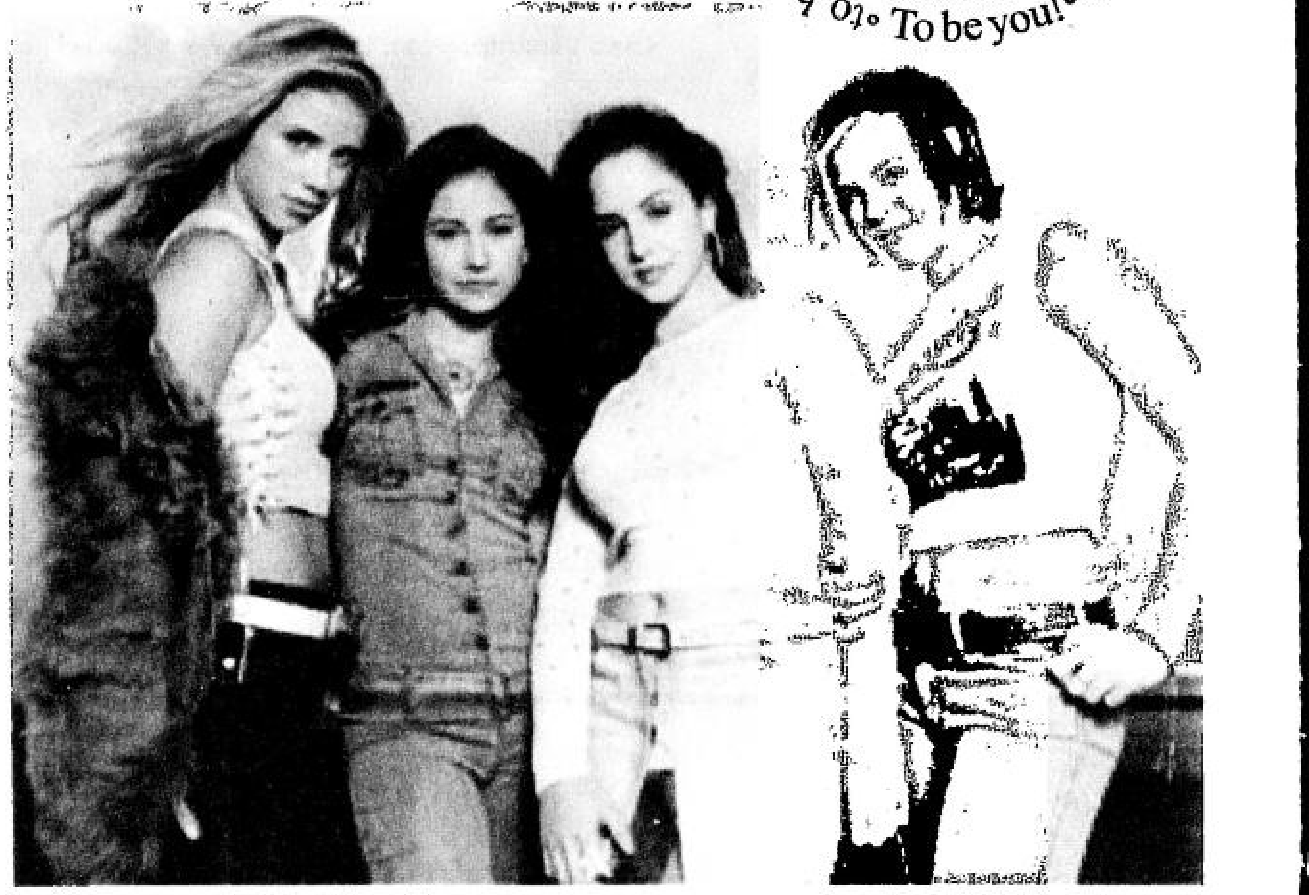
Directed by some Andy Orrick, the earthy video features Mel B walking and walking along the beach, along huge walls (somewhere Caribbean/Mediterranean-looking), while videocam moments of daughter Phoenix Chi and her are shown from time to time. The walking, and the video as well, finally come to an end when she comes home to Phoenix who is all dolled and made up, a Spice Girl in the making.

Inside my thought balloon: A little too late for Mothers' Day. B again? Whatever happened to G?

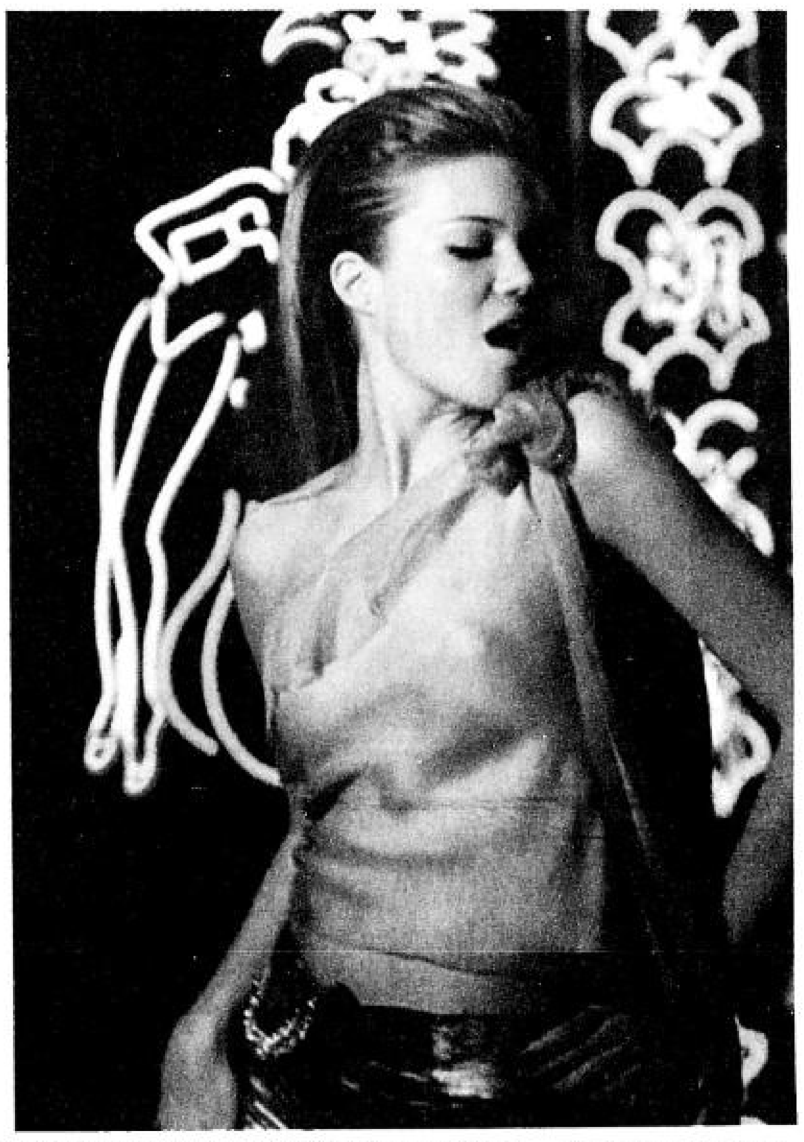
"Lady Marmalade" (Christina Aguilera, Li'l Kim, Mya, Pink)

Culled from the "Moulin Rouge" motion picture soundtrack, the video of this single elicits ambivalent emotions and reactions. (Hmmm... sexy, but scary. Cleavage galore, but they consumed the whole makeup section of Health & Beauty they look like transvestites.) Li'l Kim drowns in lots of whites, golds and silver jewelry. Mya is the corset queen complete with generous amounts of black lace, feathers and a whip (hmmm... *sadista*). Christina is the lingerie troll princess (complete with tiara) and shimmery eye makeup. And Pink is Slash gone drag. Missy Elliot opens and closes the video. Now why is she all covered up?

Inside my thought balloon: The day Missy appears in panties, garter belts and bra tops is one magical music video moment my VCR is impatiently waiting for.



IT was all a Dream: Puff Daddy's girls break videos.



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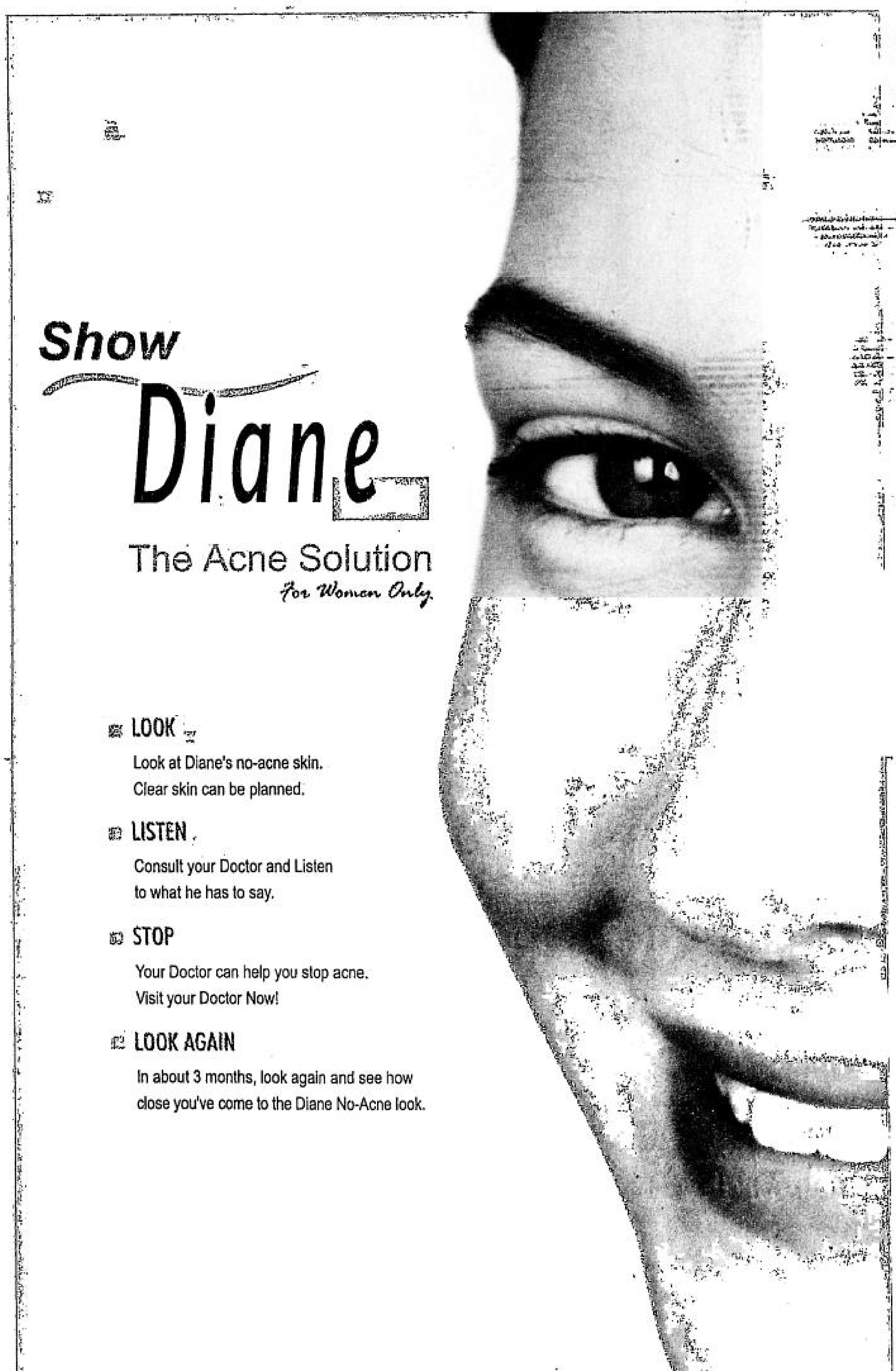

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2bU! To be you! Lifestyle Teen Section of the Philippine Daily Inquirer

The Between You and Me "Cardspeak" Contest!

It makes me feel so bad
to know that you have troubles.
You haven't done a thing to deserve them.
But troubles don't come about that--
they're just pushy that's what.
They're like that one person
everyone knows who has a habit
of dropping in unannounced
and can't take the hint when it's time to leave.
It would be nice if we could stand up and say
"Well, troubles, it's been nice
(even though it hasn't)
but I'm afraid I've made other plans."
And then we could just politely suggest
that they can't come along this time.
I know it's not that easy.
I know we always have to get through
these things the hard way...
but wouldn't it be great?

THIS WEEK'S WINNER!

Inside:
So if there's anything I can do to
help you get through all of this, let me know...
because you're a good and special person who
shouldn't be visited by troubles at all.

Something happened to me that changed my world. Everything I worked for was shattered. I've lost my identity, my purpose.

By the way I acted, "depressed" was a super understatement. I locked myself in my room and curled into a ball. The things that I loved didn't rapture me anymore. I separated myself from the world. I'd lost the zest for life.

My friends noticed that I had vanished from their worlds so they visited me. They were shocked to see me in the state I was in. They wondered what happened. The more they tried to help, the more I pushed them away. Time passed and they gave up on me. But there was one person who stayed with me even if I pushed, mocked and hurt him.

I was at my lowest and thought that I had lost everything...including Shin. I thought that I was alone, truly alone. One day I received this **Between You and Me** card from him. As I read it, I couldn't help but laugh and cry. The thought of him buying a card made me giggle. He always found them corny though he knew that I thought otherwise.

I reflected after that. I came back to my senses and finally found the courage to ask help from him to put my life back on track.

Every now and then, I would look at this card to remind myself that I wasn't alone. I never was.

- Ma. Zenaida M. Lazatin
35 Unit 2 Metro Square
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Congrats, Zenaida!
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swatch persian world (GO 103)

This is your last chance!

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By Gary Mercado

A*LIN ba ang mabilis?"* I asked myself as I looked through prepaid cards on display. The guy gave an answer I've never prepared for. *"Kabayo p're, mabilis!"* Great. In all the hundreds of places I could have bought a card, I got the one with the comedian.

Joey de Leon wannabe storeclerks notwithstanding, anyone would be hard put to really say which card is best. And after trying out 21 (yup, 21) of the 28 or so cards, I still can't pinpoint the one I like most. Try saying them all in one breath: Bell, CBCP, Espresso, E-Net, Flash, Frequency, Gas, Infocom, Impact, I-Next, Internet One, Jade, Maxess, MZ, Newgen, Pacific, Pronet, Q, Questnet, Quickweb, Rebel, Sky, Supernet, Surfshop, ISPBonanza, Vortal, YesMyNet and Zoom.

This is the nature of "dial-up" ISPs all over the world. Most start out fast but lose their edge as they get popular because resources like telephone lines and bandwidth get used up. As if choosing wasn't difficult enough, this means that at any given time your fave card can slow down while another gets an upgrade and becomes faster.

But as in any contest with many participants, there are ways to weed out the baddies. Here's a little shortlist I made:

Cost. No issue here because almost every card is offering a promo with some four times more hours than normal. Sans promo, the highest rate is P.60 per minute or P100 per hour. The brackets go up to two, four or 10 hours or more, with each card their own set of rates. With the promos though, almost every card is a bargain now so don't fret too much over price. The real issues lie below.

Installation. The best cards always have the simplest instructions: On Windows, make a new connection in Dial-Up Networking, enter the telephone number and follow the prompts. After that, right click the new connection, click Properties, remove the Area Code, remove checkmarks except TCP-IP. Double-click the new connection, enter your username and password, press "connect." Can you say "Easy"?

Some cards, however, insist that you type in DNS settings while others need you to put a few words after your username, with an "@" in between. I've always wondered, if they want you to do that, then why not include it in the username portion of the card and not in 6 pt. font in the tiny manual? And if others can do without DNS settings then why can't they? Minor gripes, yes, but I can imagine the hundreds of extra techsupport calls wasted just to clarify these things. I should know as I was one of them.

Phone lines. Major issue. Sure it may be easy to figure out, cheap and fast but it's no use if you cannot log on. Also, look for cards using multiple telephone companies aside from PLDT. If you've got a Smart, Bayantel, Globe or other landline try to find one that uses the same. Theoretically, your connection should be faster and more stable. A tip: If you keep getting busy tones, call to ask if they have an extra new number or two that didn't get listed in the card.

Techsupport. I was never a big fan of techsupport mainly because if you have reason to call them that means they screwed up somewhere and there really is no reason to talk about it further with some hapless part-timer. A tip: Call only if after reading the manual completely you still can't log on. Don't call if your question is something like "Why is it slow?" There's just no acceptable answer to that. Just move on and get a different card next time.

E-mail. An option for most people who do not want to use web-based e-mail like Hotmail or Yahoo is to use a card's outgoing mail server also known as "SMTP" server. Most cards allow this service but some don't. Many of these cards also allow you to get your own e-mail address as in "cheska@prepaidcardcompany.com" for example. This is great, but keep in mind you're committing to that card as you'd need to buy it again to use that address.

Speed. The biggest issue. I'm willing to pay a little bit more and have Sundays-only techsupport as long as I get speed. Speed allows you to do everything better, whether it's downloading, "re-searching," chatting or shooting aliens. In fact, quite a lot of the Net is unavailzable to you if you don't have speed.

The downside? A month after one gets popular, you can bet it'd be more interesting watching paint dry than downloading e-mail. The trick is to keep trying new ones and enjoy it while it lasts.

What do I do?

I've decided the solution is not having just one card, but having two or three different ones at the same time. I use a really fast one for surfing and downloading, another to send e-mail and another marginal but reliable one as a spare. At P300 bucks for an accumulated six, eight hours or more, this is not a bad deal.

Soon, Cable or even better, DSL will make an appearance in our neighborhood. Until then though I'm stuck in prepaid card land. Now if they could only do something about the wisecracks.

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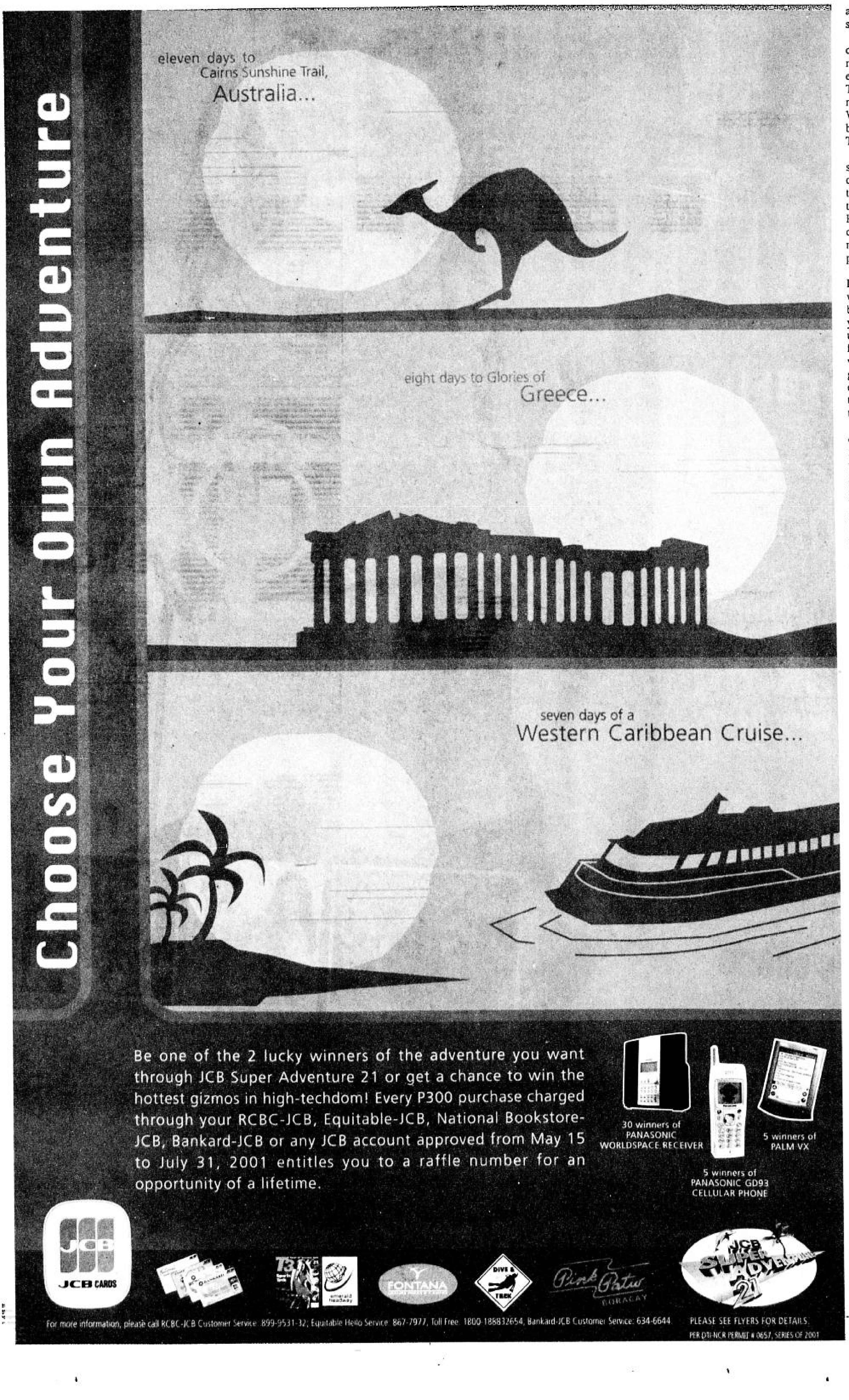

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Few moments with Westlife

"They're crazy . . . in a good way," Shane on Asian fans

By Maui V. Reyes
Photos by Romy Homillada

THAT guy goes, "What are you doing here? Then he pushed me right into the crowd!" exclaims a young reporter. She points to a bouncer, who's standing a few feet away from what looks like an army of teenyboppers (some accompanied by their parents) outside the hotel function room.

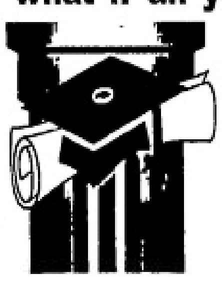
"I was just passing by and he just shoved me aside," she continues, before taking her seat. Sure, she was a teen—she could easily be mistaken as a fan. But the neon-orange sticker that stated "Press" was clearly visible on her black outfit. There was no use in getting heated about the bouncer's attitude. It was uncalled for, along with the fact that the band was more than four hours late, media members were tired and weren't

FEW/ p.D2

Blast fishing can be stopped by something more powerful.

Public opinion.

RN21896



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MESSAGE OF THE WEEK
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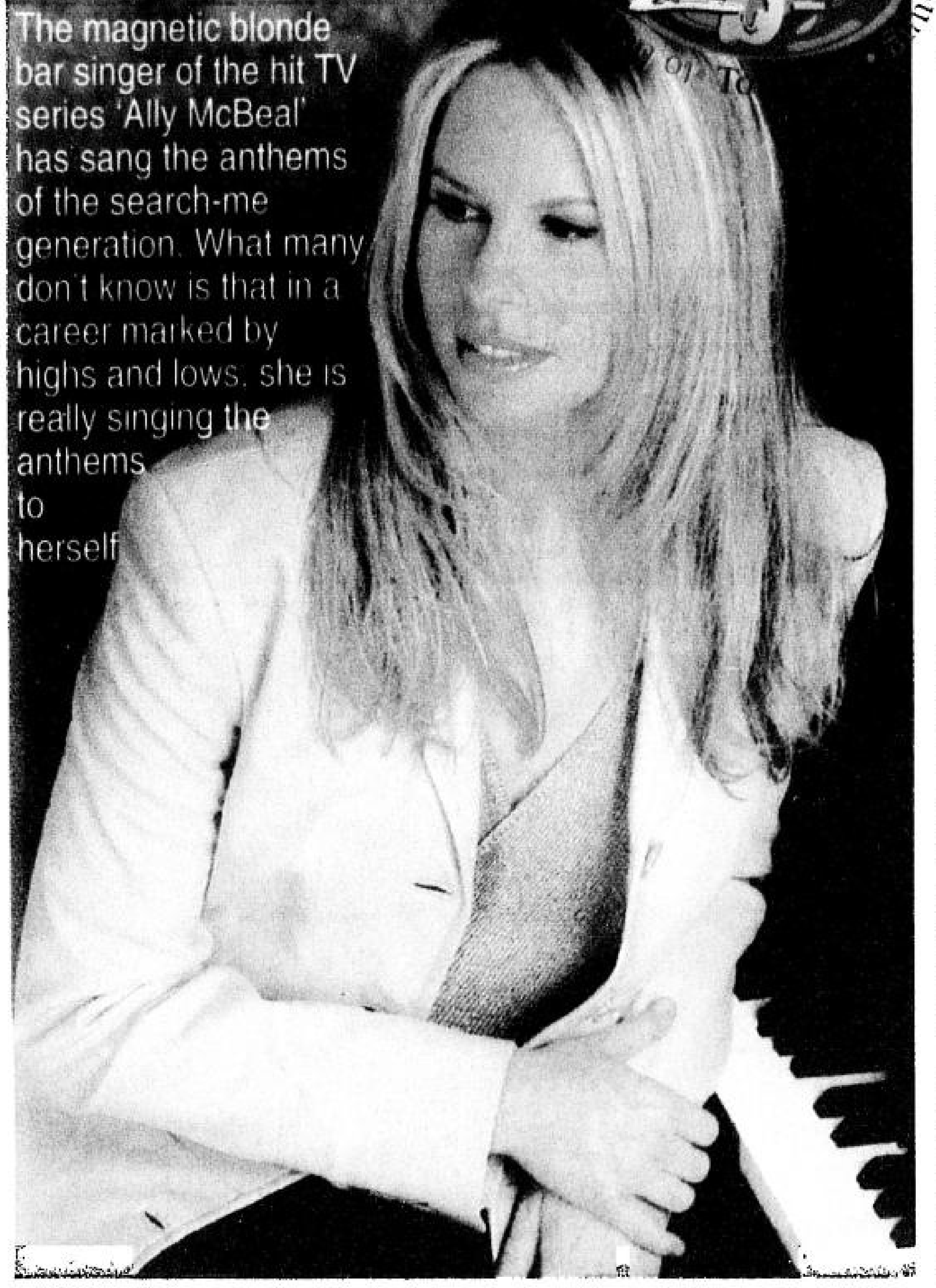


The magnetic blonde bar singer of the hit TV series 'Ally McBeal' has sang the anthems of the search-me generation. What many don't know is that in a career marked by highs and lows, she is really singing the anthems to herself

Searching the soul of Vonda Shepard

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY TIM YAP

PHUKET, Thailand—I started the day wanting to experience the world-renowned Banyan Tree massage and aromatherapy treatments. Since it was my first time in this serene part of Thailand, I felt like getting spiritually and emotionally in touch with myself—that new age kind of stuff.

Then again, my schedule that day was to interview Sony Music artist Vonda Shepard, the magnetic blonde bar singer in the TV hit series "Ally McBeal." Vonda Shepard's character in a way, represents Ally McBeal's soul—hers is the voice that accompanies some of the show's most poignant moments.

I saw her the other night over dinner. Unlike other artists, she arrived without fanfare, without the bouncers that this girl group had, without the array of handlers this other boy band were with. She was just there, getting food from the buffet table, alone. I approached her and asked for a picture, she gamely obliged.

The following day, as she entered the interview hall, a whiff of fresh air enveloped the room. Her positive aura could easily be felt. "Singing, playing and writing is what I live for," she tells us.

Her music can be characterized as introspective-meet-soul with a slight alternative artsy edge, or "a mix of Tori Amos, the yearning of a church choir member and Melissa Etheridge." "I think of myself as Rickie Lee Jones meets Chaka Khan—in my dreams," she says with a humble sense of humor.

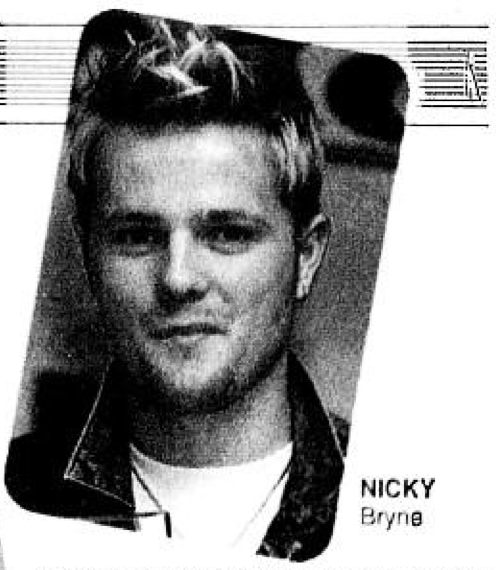
'Ally McBeal' anthems

Her song, "Searchin' My Soul," the theme song of the series, zoomed up the charts as fast as the TV show hit high with the ratings. "The music does tend

SEARCHING/ p.D5

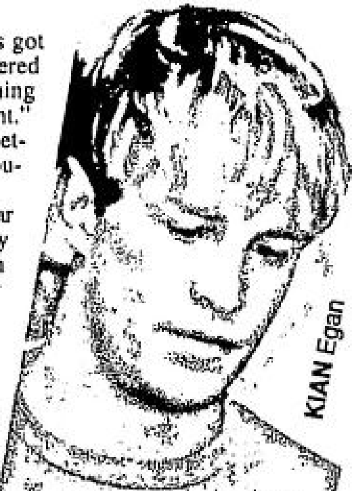
Few moments with Westlife

(From page D1)

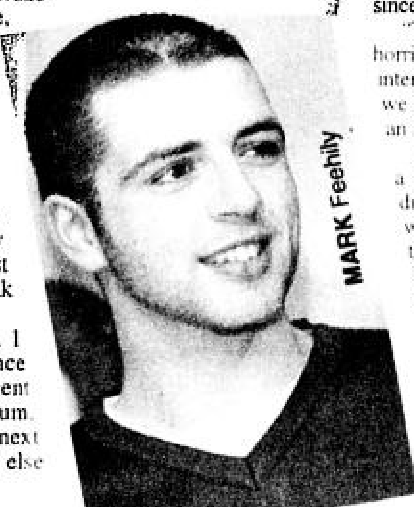


NICKY Bryne

SHANE Filan



KIAN Egan



MARK Feehily

BRYAN McFadden

fed, and to top it all, what was to come after all the waiting wouldn't even be worth the wait. Someone said the press conference was going to start at 12 nn. Another at 1 p.m., then another at 2 p.m. Well, the invites said 11:30 a.m. for both the opening act and the band. It was now 4 p.m. and still no sign of the band. We were told they were still filming some MTV segments. Oh goody, they were *really* following the itinerary.

I walked out of the venue to escape the CD music pervading the room. I was already hungry but couldn't leave for the band might show up. Plus I was already tired playing with the Gameboy we brought. One look at the small crowd that formed outside the function room indicated what all the fuss was about: Westlife was in town.

Reminiscent of Beatlemania

The story of how the five Irish pretty boys got together is already known. They were discovered while singing in a hospital room, the remaining two auditioning since a trio "just wasn't right." And, of course, who would forget boy band veteran Ronan Keating who boosted the boys' popularity by taking them under his wing?

Westlife has already visited our shores a year ago. It was around summer time when they promoted their first album, "Westlife," which spawned the hits "Swear it Again" and the cover "Seasons in the Sun." Back then their concert consisted of about 10 songs, two of which they sang twice, and Mark Feehily's voice breaking every once in a while. Westlife was surely following the footsteps of platinum Irish boy band Boyzone, this time delivering five fresh faces with mushy love songs. Let's not forget the undying covers... Abba, Phil Collins... and, oh, what would Billy Joel think?!

As if it wasn't enough that the Westlife craze was reminiscent of the Beatlemania (of course, I'm exaggerating when I say that), the five boys headed back to the studio to record another album that hoped to break the 400,000 copies of "Westlife." But you need a teaser to attract little girls... a DVD documentary, a book and the news that Bryan McFadden and fiancée "probably conceived" their child on New Year's Day. They were dead lucky when top diva Mariah Carey enlisted them to sing on the cover "Against All Odds," a surefire way to help them break into the US market.

After releasing what would become a No. 1 hit ("Uptown Girl," anyone?), Westlife once again visits our country, making prepubescent girls (and boys) rush to buy their second album, "Coast to Coast." Then it's rush-rush to the next country. Or in my case, rush-rush wherever else they need to be that day.

20-minute presscon

As the band entered the conference room, the first thing we noticed was that Mark had less than an inch of hair on his head, and was donning sunglasses. After waiting for what seemed like an eternity, we were told that each member of the press could only ask one question. It didn't faze the young girl reporters behind me. They were far too squeamish to even bother thinking of questions, let alone *one*. A young girl ran up to Nicky Bryne and handed him a wooden nameplate with his name on it. He gladly accepted it, gave a smug smile while photographers took snaps of him.

It was obvious how Westlife could immediately drive your anger away. Reporters flashed smiles, girls giggled and all raised their hands as if begging to have them win a million dollars. "Fans here in Asia [as compared to other countries] are amazing, they're lovely. They're crazy. . . in a good way," said Shane with a bashful smile (girls sighed).

What fans are crazy about is their second album, "Coast to Coast," which not only boasts of 17 tracks of love, love, love, but has also been repackaged especially for the tour. The revamped album now comes in a cardboard package with a swank eye-candy pic of the five guys, and contains a bonus CD that features eight more tracks. Dance tracks aren't sprinkled on the album—unlike 'N Sync that ventures into different sounds.

This band isn't planning on straying from your basic pop-love songs. "We're very successful in what we do, we're very happy with what we do, and I think our music appeals to a lot of people, young and old," Shane said. "[But] I think it's wrong to like just one type of music. We're just a band that makes pop music. If you just remove pop music, and it's all going to be R&B, then what will happen to pop?" Nicky contemplated. Um, sure.

Throughout our 20-minute rush-rush press conference (You're not cross-eyed, you read right: 20 minutes), we learned that they know how to read music, they like U2 ("Well yeah, they *are* the men, look how old they are!" Nicky snorted, referring to the infamous Bono quote on today's pop artists) and got Claudia Schiffer to star in their video because they wanted someone "gorgeous and amazing." "She was very, very quiet, though," Bryan said. And they also do covers for charity not because they want to. Sure.

The topic turned to spats between artists. It's a fact that the Spice Girls and fellow Irish rock band Ash hate their guts. In fact, Ash burned 300 copies of their album to profess their hatred for their music. Bryan rolled his eyes. "[Ash] burning 300 CDs is pretty cool since that's 300 CDs sold, in a way," he reasoned.

"To slay us and use our names to gain publicity is a horrible thing to do, but we don't really mind it," Shane interjected. "I mean, look, we travel around the world, we do our shows, we get fans. Ash is coming out with an album soon, so we'll see how *they* do!"

The five started cracking up on private jokes when a reporter asked what they had been doing lately during their free time. A minute was spent laughing with their entourage, recalling some funny stories they had on tour playing card games, as the press kept quiet. They then focused on the conference again.

The band was awarded for their chart-topping hits by a radio station. Then it's BMG's turn to award them for selling 280,000 copies of their sophomore album.

Since the band's flight to fame since it was formed in July 1998, they've probably picked up some important lessons from bigwigs in the industry. The most important lesson they've learned? "In this industry, especially being in a pop band, you're just a human being. People treat you differently because you're in a band, not because you're you. This could all end in a second," Nicky said.

The press photographers requested a group picture of the band, sans the people who awarded them. Before the band could pose, they were ushered out of the room. Young reporters ran up to the stage, past the press barricade (yes, a barricade) and grabbed whatever they could—water bottles, paper, the flowers on display.

I was halfway out the door when 2bU! correspondent Tammy David caught up with me.

"Hey, check out what I got!" she said. I turned around and looked at what she had in her hand.

It was a wooden nameplate with the name "Nicky" on it. *With reports from Tammy David*

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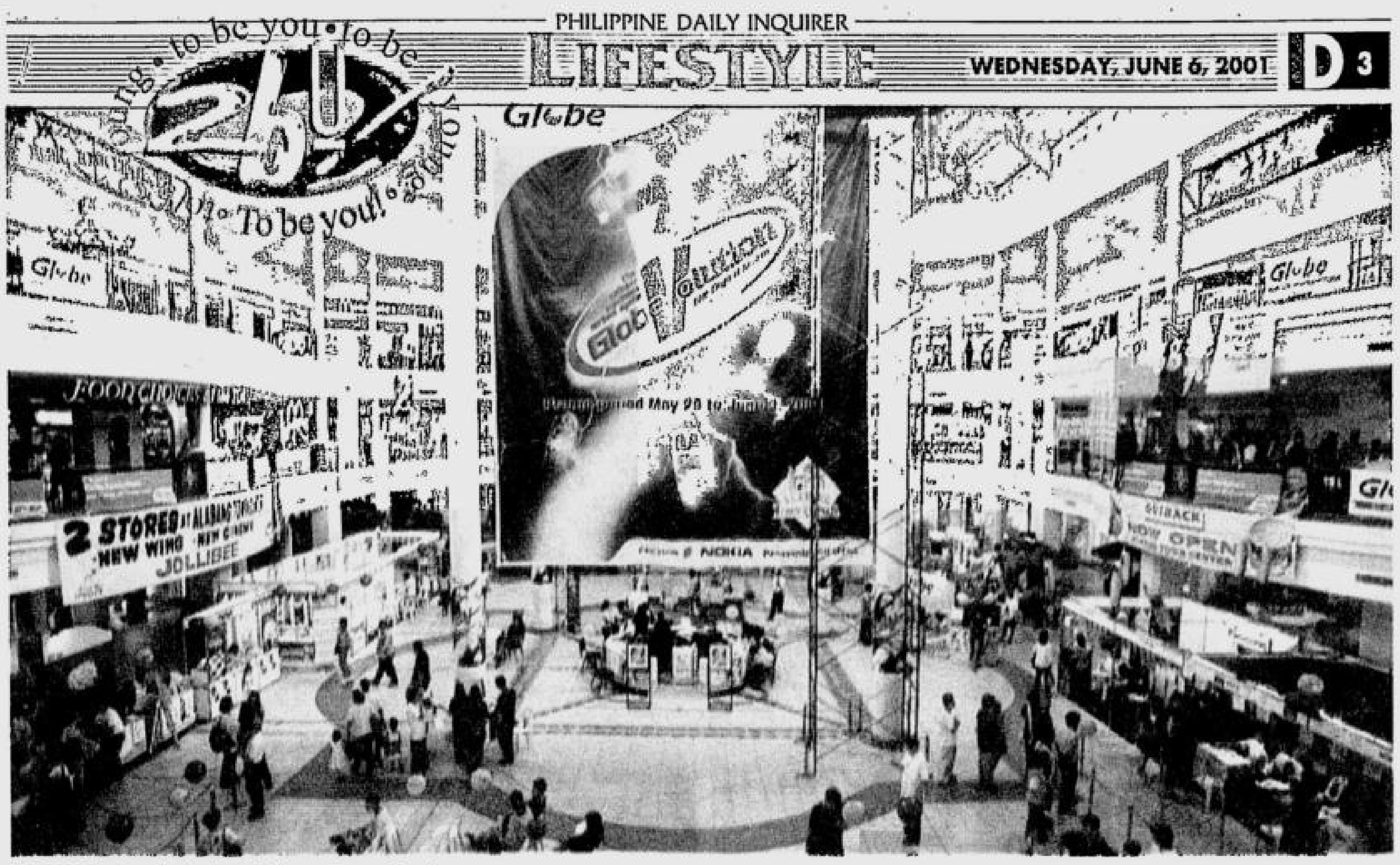

BUSY "Globevolution" at Alabang Town Center

Good deals, cheap thrills at 'Globevolution'

TUESDAY afternoons have almost always been peaceful, even solitary, in Glorietta. Not this time.

The landing between the second floor of Glorietta 4 and Streetlife was packed with people. Lines were snaking around, people were milling about different booths, apparently enthralled by the glass displays.

That was the scene during the "Globevolution." And it wasn't only at Glorietta. At the same time, other malls all over the country had also been transformed into havens for cell phone enthusiasts—SM City North Edsa, Alabang Town Center, SM Megamall, Ayala Center Cebu and Victoria Plaza in Davao. People flocked toward the different venues, all eager to get a good deal on their dream phones.

Those were the keywords—good deals. The four different booths showcased the newest phones from the top four cellular phone brands—Ericsson, Nokia, Panasonic and Siemens.

"This is the one time in a year when we bring together the dealers and consumers in one place," said Jones Campos of Globe.

I found myself drooling over Nokia's new silver 6210. Looking at the price lists, it became evident that one didn't have to stop at drooling. They've given the prices a major cut down, making the phones affordable. And if you signed up for postpaid plans, you were able to get some of the units free. The Nokia 8250, which normally costs P18,190, was sold for only P14,000 under the business plan. Panasonic's GD35, which is WAP-enabled, cost only P3,990. The Siemens S40, worth P20,000, was sold at P15,990. Ericsson's R320, originally sold at P17,500, was available for only P6,290. According to Dimpy Jazmines, there were no charges for registration.

This was a dream come true for people who can't seem to stay content with the units they already have.

Regular Globe SIM packs were also available for only P350. The menu-enhanced GlobeXplore SIM was available for only P500.

Non-Globe users were also able to swap their old SIM cards for new ones paying only P300 for airtime value.

Consumers also got the chance to win raffle prizes. The display of cameras, Palm Pilots, cell phones, VCD and DVD players, video cameras and flat-screen TVs were enough to make anyone's eyes bulge.

New subscribers were automatically eligible for Globe's draw today, where the lucky winner will be driving away with a 2001 Mercedes Benz C200.

Dang, I should have gotten that 3310 for my mom. *Pam Pastor*

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There once was a boy named Christopher whose biggest dream was to see a real rocketship that had travelled through space. "One day," he said aloud, "I will visit the land where rocketships are built and sit in the same cockpit where astronauts flew." What Christopher didn't know was that his Mom heard his wish. So she bought a special Lamp that could help parents fulfill their children's wishes. With this, she started saving up for her son's best birthday gift ever. In five short years, on his 12th birthday, Christopher found himself in a real space center in Florida. His eyes were wide open and his breath was on hold when he walked inside a real space shuttle for the first time. With his mom by his side, Christopher whispered to her, "You are the best Mommy in the world!"

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Age ______ Birthdate ___|___|___ Telephone No. ______ Best time to call ______
Pager ______
Mobile Phone ______
email address ______

THE INSULAR LIFE
ASSURANCE COMPANY, LTD.

BORN TO WEAR JEANS

BY JULES ALCANTARA

IF there is one 20th-century invention that will withstand the test of time (and the ever-changing fashion trends), it will have to be the ever-reliable pair of jeans. Not everyone will be able to buy a Lulu Guinness bag or a pair of Jimmy Choo stilettos but I am more than willing to bet that *everyone* owns, at the very least, a pair of denim pants. I should know—to date, I have 12 pairs of jeans that I regularly use, not counting the ones I don't use anymore since they are either so faded or full of holes. My friends have said in jest that I might even end up walking down the aisle still wearing jeans. Oh, if only.

Jeans are the universal fashion statement of this generation. Girls may go gaga and wear fancy tops and elaborate accessories. Guys can go wear the loudest of shirts and prints and out-of this-world shoes but one thing remains constant in their "school uniform"—a pair of jeans.

Levi's scouted around top colleges and universities for young people who best embody the look of the future. From AdMU, UP, DLSU-CSB, to UA&P and DLSU, Levi's discovered 22 guys and girls who will be this year's Levi's Campus Models.

Here are some who caught our eye one rainy afternoon in Ortigas. Their exuberance and energy were contagious it was hard not to miss them. Plus they looked like they were born to wear jeans.

Denise Peralta

An avid "Harry Potter" fan, Denise describes herself a plain Jane who practically lives in her jeans—"I would wear them until they're *butas*!" In fact, her schoolmates at UA&P where she is taking up business management know when she is wearing her favorite jeans—she wears a big polo shirt over it to cover the hole in the back.

She sees herself as either a corporate trainer ("I want to train people to think.") or an image consultant like Bruce Willis' character in the Disney movie. "The Kid." "I'm very ambitious. I plan ahead. Especially with what's happening to our country right now, you can't afford to live in the present anymore," she explains.

First pair of jeans: "When I was 10 years old. Would you believe it was Levi's? At 10, you don't know better so *siyempre* it's your parents who pick out stuff for you. I think it was *baston*! Looking back at the pictures I can't help but think, 'There were so many cuts to choose from—why did I choose the *baston* one?' Faded *pa, ha*!"

Favorite pair: "It's hard for me to find the right pair of jeans because I have genetically big hips. But Superlow's hugs the hips pretty well."

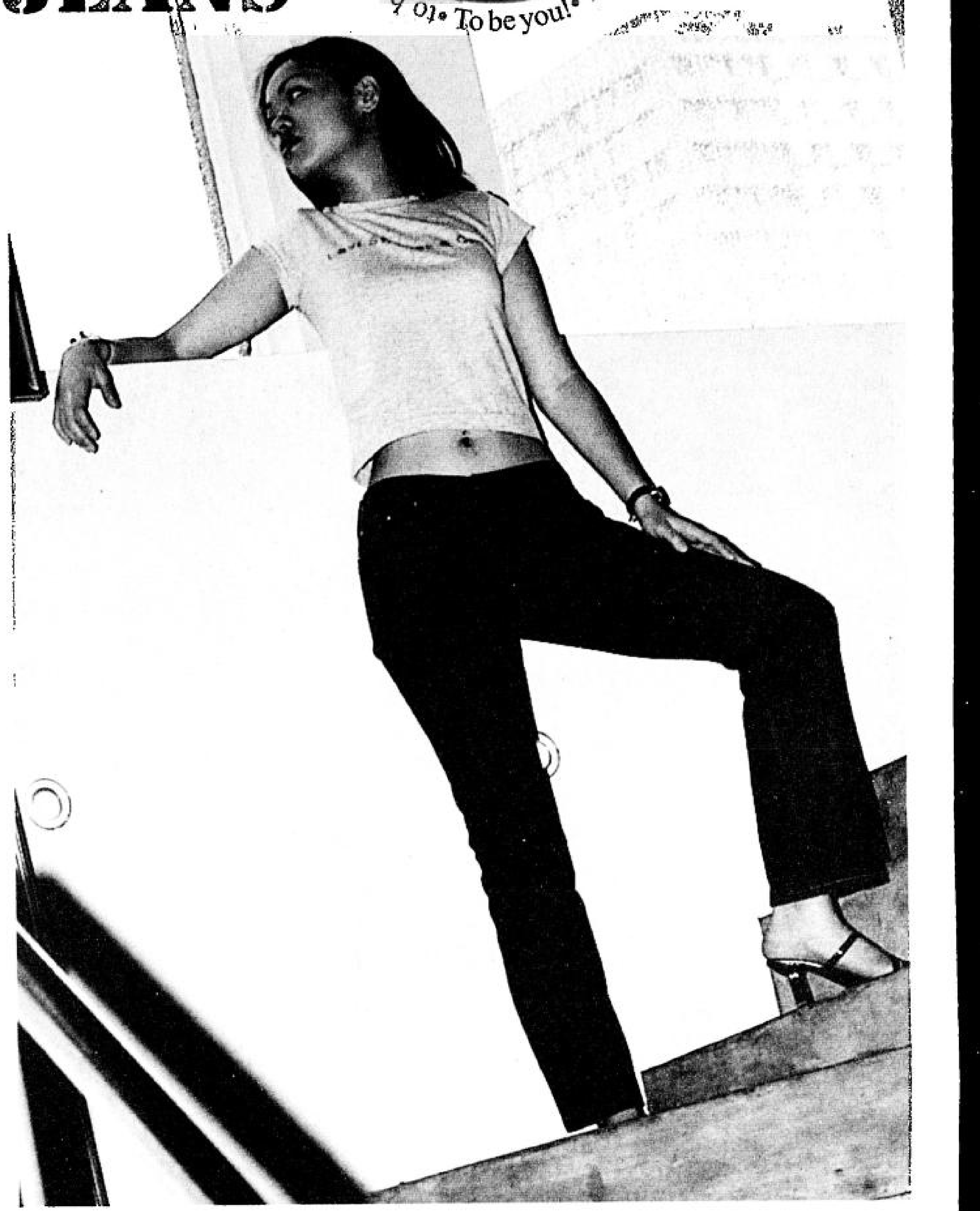
Jezer Maducdoc

Would you believe, this 20-year-old looker would rather work behind the scene? The communication arts major from De La Salle University wants to work in an advertising agency. "I want to be involved in the conceptualization of an ad campaign," he says. Quiet and exuding a mysterious demeanor, Jezer caught the eye of talent scouts who were present during the Levi's Campus Models' lunch with the press. Very down to earth, Jezer also adds that his ultimate goal is to end up a creative director. Who knows, years from now, he could very well be directing the latest commercial for Levi's?

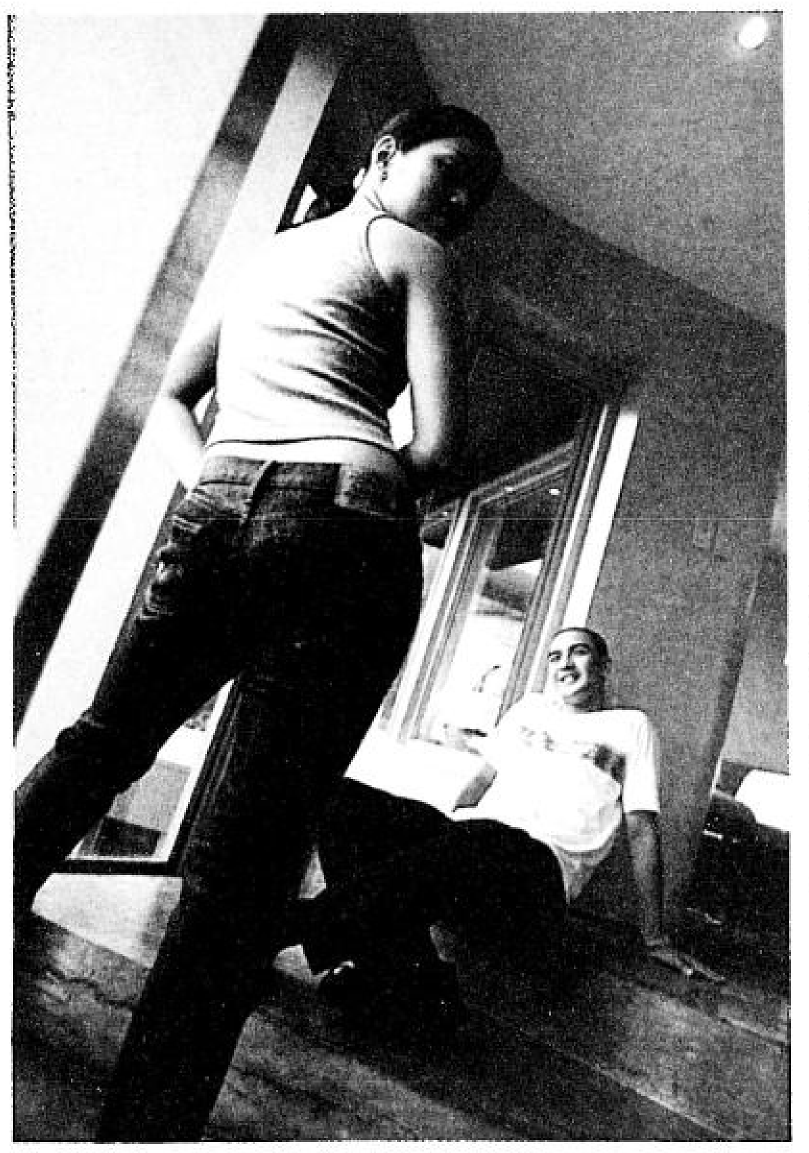
First pair: "My parents bought it for me. I remember it was *baston*."

Favorite pair: "I like the Engineered Jeans. It's super comfortable, it doesn't limit movement and you can wear it with either running shoes or formal shoes."

DENISE Peralta and Jezer Maducdoc



ANNA Castro



CHIQUI Lucindo and Ryan Ordoñez

Anna Castro

The girl oozing with sex appeal is how people often describe Anna. But she seems to be unaware, much less affected by this. "I'm a person who is not really concerned with my appearance," she simply explains.

Lean and lanky, Anna's face becomes animated as she discusses her future plans of working in a glossy magazine. Very focused, this avid jogger knows exactly where she wants to go.

A voracious reader, she reads "everything I can get my hands on." The communications major from UA&P, loves to discuss excellent contemporary literature, particularly "Memoirs of a Geisha." Anna and her friends have spent long conversations on memorable words and passages of the book written by Arthur Golden. She waxes poetic: "The book has so much substance. Reading it was such an experience. It was so lyrical." Words she could very well use to describe herself.

First pair: "They weren't really my choice because I'm sure at the time, my mom bought it for me. I think it was Gap Kids or something and I think it was kind of *baston*. I was my mom's doll—she would dress me up."

Favorite pair: "I love the Superlows. I love the color. I love the fit. It's just right. And you know how it is sometimes when you wash your jeans and after, they don't fit the same or don't fit right anymore. But with Superlows, it goes back to the shape that I like."

Ryan Ordoñez

If there is one person (among millions) who jumped for joy when the Los Angeles Lakers won against the San Antonio Spurs, it would be Ryan Ordoñez. A certified basketball fanatic, this UA&P management major only had one word for his favorite NBA basketball team: "Sweep!" Apart from basketball, Ryan also loves to go to the beach where he unwinds. He considers the beach his spiritual home and practically gets speechless, perhaps in awe, when asked to explain why he loves the water and the sand. Oh, and by the way, he also loves girls who are sweet. "I have a weakness for girls who are *malambing*," he says with a grin which, by the way, is guaranteed to melt any girl's heart. Fun loving, he eventually wants to get into the night business and put up a bar similar to Stars or Il Ponticello.

First pair: "It was Levi's 501 button-fly."

Favorite pair: "I like Levi's jeans that are straight-cut or boot-cut. It depends on the shoes I'm wearing really."

Chiqui Lucindo

A UP biology major, the chances of Chiqui ending up a doctor is slim to none. Nope, it isn't because she is frail and timid and can't hack dissecting frogs. On the contrary, Chiqui is such a bundle of energy that you don't know when she's going to stop. Back in high school, she was actively involved with the student council and varsity swimming team. Early on in college, she used to be a part of the UP Pep Squad. Before she became a Levi's Campus Model, she taught PE for the Tumblekids program. Chiqui is also a familiar name to Pinoyexchange fanatics since she moderates for the popular online forum. With all these activities, this self-proclaimed daddy's girl still has time to take her dad and *lolo* on dates.

Future plan? "I want to follow in the footsteps of my mom and my brother who are both in the field of public relations," she enthuses. A walking Energizer bunny, she says, "I figure, I should do these things while my body can still handle it." She vows to "slow down" when she gets older.

From the looks of it, it may take some time before Chiqui runs out of batteries, so to speak.

First pair: "It was *baston*, high-waisted, with belt, and it was tucked in. Oh, gosh! It was so *baduy*!" (Cringes)

Favorite pair: "Now, I'm into baggy boot-cut jeans. And I really love the Superlows."

E-mail the author at jules26@gurlmail.com

Commuters' survival guide

BY MA. ANGELA VALENZUELA IGNACIO
2bU! Correspondent

MOST of us cringe at the very idea of commuting. Just seeing the impossibly long lines at FX or jeepney stops or people literally wading through flooded streets during the rainy season is enough to make a grown man cry. However, it's not as horrible and unglamorous as it seems—it's a practical, not to mention efficient, way of getting anywhere and everywhere you need to go. Besides, it's one of those things that people from all walks of life have to learn sooner or later to survive in this fast-paced world of ours.

For the first-timers out there, you probably feel a bit lost and don't have any inkling where to start. I myself am a relative newbie to commuting, having learned the how-tos only a year ago. Right before school started, my mom had to teach me the basics before I could go off on my own, and I must confess that I was more than a little petrified at the thought. Eventually, I pretty much got the hang of it, and even picked up a few pointers along the way—the hard way! Downright embarrassing, I tell you. So for your convenience (and for seasoned pros as well), here are some useful tried-and-tested tips that will make your commuting life easier:

Know your stops. First of all, familiarize yourself with the different routes and destinations of public vehicles you're about to ride in as well as the signs that display their stops. For instance, in buses "Ibabaw" usually indicates that the route taken is via the flyover or whichever road is higher, while "Ilalim" means the bus takes the underpass or whichever is lower. So if you come from Cubao and you need to go to Megamall, hop on a bus with a "Crossing/Ibabaw" sign; otherwise, you'll go straight to the underpass and miss your stop. Knowing these things will not only prevent you from getting off at the wrong stop but also help you find the quickest route to your destination.

Explore. Be adventurous! Try taking different modes of transportation like FX vehicles and the MRT (I must say this is definitely a breakthrough, although it always becomes so jam-packed that each car closely resembles a speeding can of sardines by 8 a.m.). Who knows, you might discover a more efficient route than the one you usually take? If you do get lost, though, you can always take a cab but I'm telling you, it's going to cost you an arm and a leg. (FYI: The last time I rode a cab—that was only a few days ago—the flag-down rate was P25.)

Abide by the rules. You might notice that traffic is mainly caused by public vehicles that suddenly stop in the middle of the road to let off or take in passengers, and this irritates the heck out of just about every single person on the planet. Be a good citizen and get on or off at the correct stop.

Arm yourself. I'm not talking about guns or knives but tools that protect you from hazardous natural and environmental elements. Umbrellas are a must; you don't have to bring one of those big ones, a sturdy folding umbrella will do. You'd also do well to bring a handkerchief with you—more often than not, air pollution can get unbearably nasty.

Wear comfortable shoes. Feet are the most abused part of the body; it's time to cut them a little slack. You'll obviously have to do some serious walking (and in some cases, running), so it's advisable to wear really comfy shoes like sneakers, slip-ons, rubber sandals and the like. During rainy days, it's best if you wear closed shoes so as to keep your toes clean.

Tame your tresses. For long-haired people, it's a good thing to tie your hair especially when riding a jeepney. Not only does it keep it off your face but off other people's faces, too, as the wind whips it around. Trust me, the disgruntled person beside you doesn't want to know how your hair tastes like or have his eye constantly poked by hair strands.

Bring loose change. As much as possible, keep P10 and P20 bills and some coins with you. It'll make everything a lot smoother for you as well as the driver/conductor. It also helps if you prepare the exact amount for the fare beforehand, if you already know how much it's going to be. The usual jeepney fare nowadays is P4, and those of buses, the MRT and the like vary depending on the stops.

Use coin purses. It's a handy thing to keep your loose change in a coin purse; you'll avoid having to take out your wallet and attract a potential snatcher. Besides, it sure beats digging in your pockets and digging your elbows into people beside you in the process.

Be discreet. For your own safety, it's best if you maintain a simple appearance to ward off people with bad intentions. Avoid flaunting your cell phones; thieves have become so adept at stealing that they can snatch your phone faster than you can say—uh, text—"uncle." Remove your jewelry and keep them in a safe place in your bag or a in secret pocket perhaps. There have been some horror stories about torn earlobes and bruised wrists and necklaces suddenly and very painfully yanked from their owners' necks and—well, you get the idea.

Watch your stuff. People get ripped off every day, and that's pretty much a given. Take very good care of your belongings, and keep your valuables in a safe place. You'd be surprised at how desperate some robbers can get—they'll take anything.

Be a gentleman (or woman). Contrary to popular belief, gentlemanliness doesn't apply only to guys but to girls as well. Mind your manners, people—a little common decency does a world of good. Avoid cutting in lines and wait for your turn. If you can, politely offer your seat to children, the disabled and the elderly every once in a while. Help fellow passengers pass along their fare to the driver. Come on, guys, show them that chivalry's not dead and buried yet.

Learn self-defense. I hate to say this, but some things just can't be helped. It's getting more and more dangerous out in the streets with every passing minute. To protect yourself, enroll in a self-defense class like judo and learn a few valuable moves. If worse comes to worst, you can execute a move or two to get away from your assailant. Of course, it would help immensely if dark streets and alleyways were lighted and there were more policemen patrolling them. Hint, hint!

Enjoy your freedom. I have to admit that commuting isn't exactly a bowl of cherries, but, hey, so is life. Just think, you can go almost anywhere now.

As to commuting literally opening up a whole new world for a person, I don't believe it. For me, it opens up a whole new person to the world, clichéd as it may seem. Loosen up, relax, take advantage of the new knowledge you now have and experience the joys as well as the hustle and bustle of everyday life in the urban jungle. Welcome to the real world, people. Good luck!

Searching the soul of Vonda Shepard

(From page D2)

to pull Ally to a different place—it takes her further into herself, and helps give you a sense of the depth of her character."

Aside from Shepard's "Searchin' My Soul," "The Wildest Times of the World," "Maryland" and the new "Will You Marry Me?," the album "Songs from Ally McBeal" (featured on this page) showcases her versions of classics such as "Walk Away Renee," "It's in His Kiss," "I Only Want to be with You," "You Belong to Me" and "Hooked on Feeling" from the infamous "dancing baby" episode.

As Ally's muse, she says, "I'm like her in that I'm a career woman who works hard and still struggles with the messages instilled in her during childhood." She ponders, "There's a desire to get married and have kids someday, but questioning it at the same time."

While it is true that her character reflects Ally's inner most thoughts, her innate style is very different from Miss McBeal's. "I'm more of a human, a natural kind of writer, not someone who has every hair in place, so having makeup people fussing around me all the time is challenging," says the reluctant celebrity.

Vonda describes her co-star Calista Flockhart as "loads of fun, intelligent, articulate." They talk a lot about the success of their show and dealing with it. Like when the media focused on Ally's anorexia. "It just got out of control—the more the media focused on her, the more pressured she got."

Ups and downs

Vonda has had her share of pressure and patience as well. This lady has been through a lot. She has been writing and performing since age 14—with several years on the club circuit, doing backup vocals for the likes of Rickie Lee Jones and Jackson Browne. "I sometimes think back to a year ago, when I was playing in a club for 35 people and saying, 'Where is my audience?'"

Her long exposure to the music industry has given her a slew of ups and downs. "When my old record label dropped me, I was crushed and depressed." Her manager left her as well, and she felt all alone.

"It made me more spiritual. I went back inside—music was what saved me so I channeled all the pain in the music and shut everything else," the now happy and content Sony artist reflects on her professional life.

For a long time, she would be scouting for a label and nothing was happening in her career. She would ask her good friend. Michelle Pfeiffer (they have been close since they were 19), why her peers were so far ahead.

Pfeiffer would advise and motivate her, from her career down to how many sit-ups she would do. "Michelle is a special woman, she never stops growing," Vonda says of her best buddy.

Pfeiffer's husband, Emmy award-winning producer and writer (not to mention a fan of Shepard's) David Kelly, caught Vonda in one of her performances. Right then and there, he asked if she could contribute music to his new series. The rest, as they say, is history.

VONDA Shepard during the interview at the Laguna Phuket resort in Thailand. Ally's ally is a spiritual, introspective and generous artist.

RECEIVING a gold record award from Sony Music big boss Wally Chamsay and Roslyn Reyes

Open to inspiration

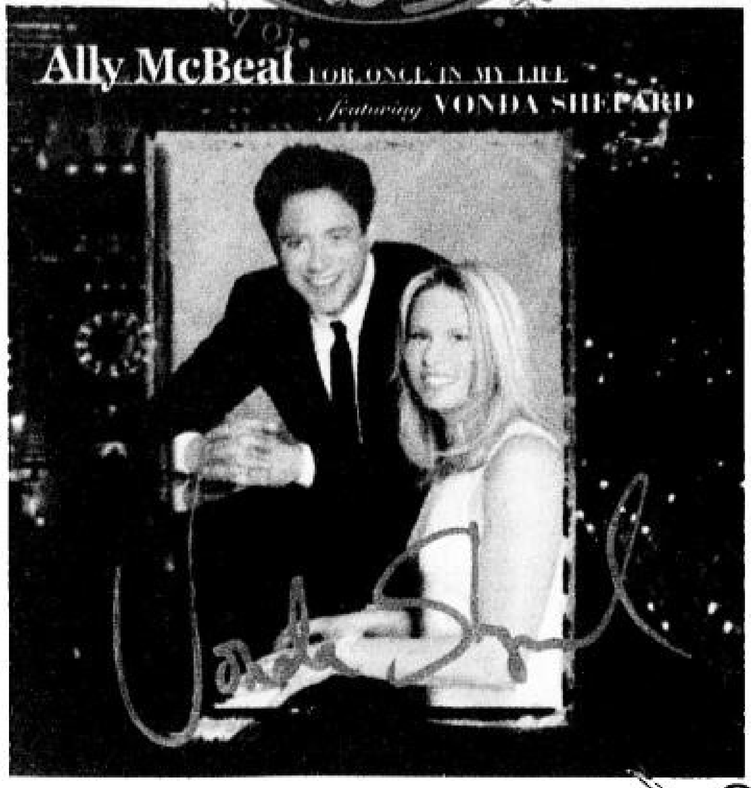
In the span of the interview, we talked lengthily about the show, artists she has worked with (like Robert Downey Jr. and Sting, who both sing with her in her latest album) down to religion. She exuded a very open vibe.

She practices *subud*, a form of meditation originating from Indonesia—"a way of understanding why I'm here." She finds inspiration in the small things in life. She loves sitting in cafes and observing people and thinking about life. "A simple thing such as a leaf dying on a side walk would make me open to inspiration."

"Do you think you have found yourself?" I ask. "Parts of it," she answers.

After talking to her and feeling her warm sincerity, I felt really calm—it was more relaxing than a massage. Suddenly, I didn't feel like going to the spa anymore.

"Ain't it funny how you're walkin' through life and it turns on a dime?"—from "The Wildest Times of the World" by Vonda Shepard.



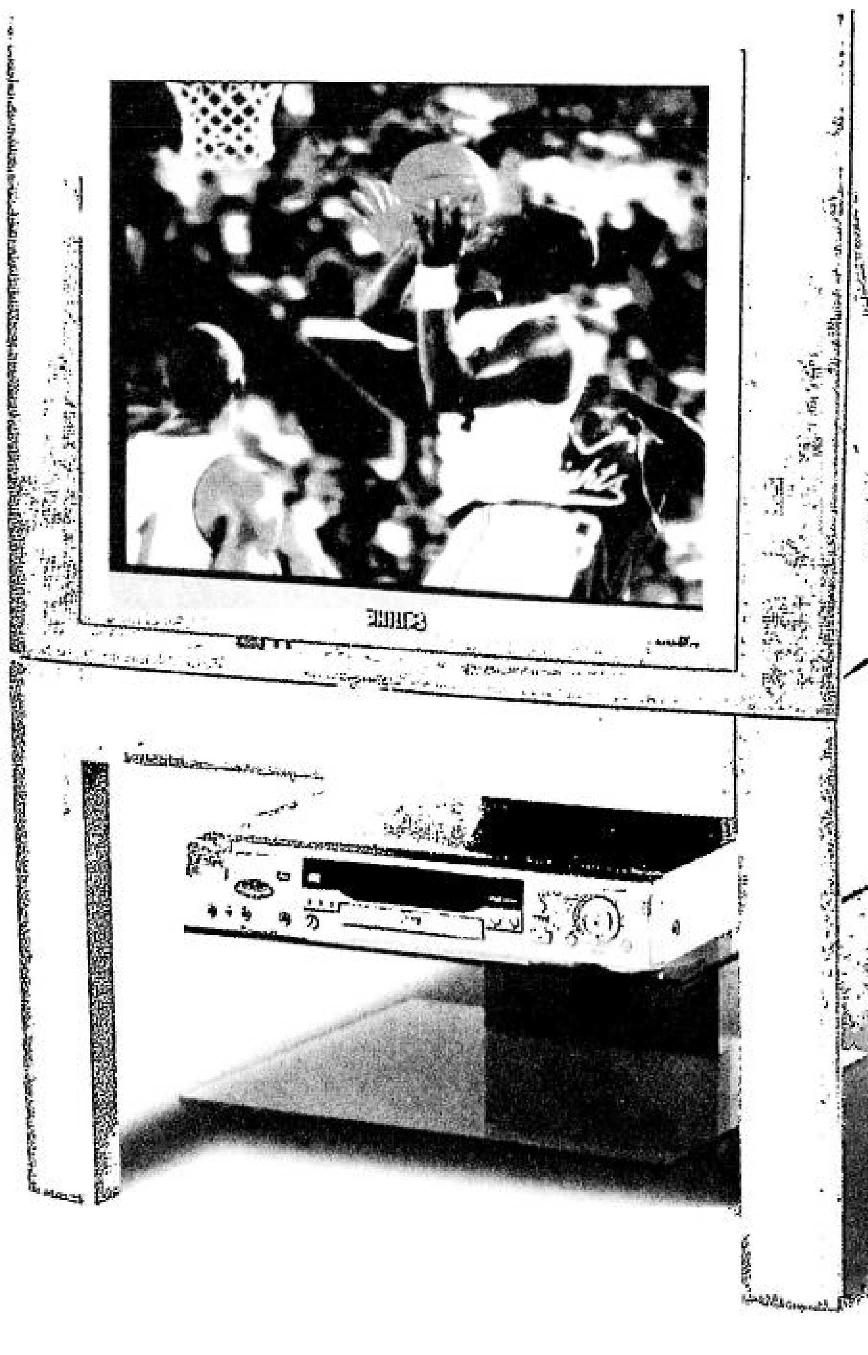
FOR 2BU! READERS. Cut and keep your own Vonda Shepard autographed souvenir, here with Robert Downey Jr.

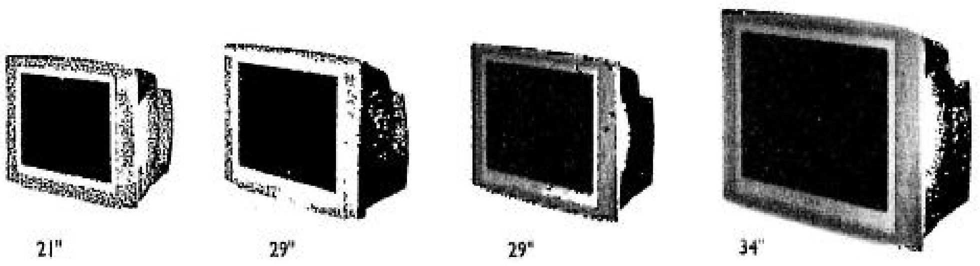
Lipton Ice Tea
Real Fruit Goodness in Real Ice Tea.

Four seasons
Honeymansi
Lemon

I want action, big-time!

Real Flat Picture Tube 86.36 cm. (34") •
Double Window PIP •
Incredible Picture •
Virtual Dolby® Surround •
Anti-Reflection Coating •
Active Subwoofer •
Digital Comb Filter •





The Philips Matchline 34" Real Flat TV means big enjoyment.

When you've got a television this big, who can resist watching? Its Real Flat Picture Tube displays perfect images from any angle — great when the whole gang is in the house. You want to talk about design? How about a cutting-edge shape that fits right in the 22nd century? So if you want home entertainment that's big in every way, get a Philips Matchline Real Flat TV. We've got to admit, things are getting better...

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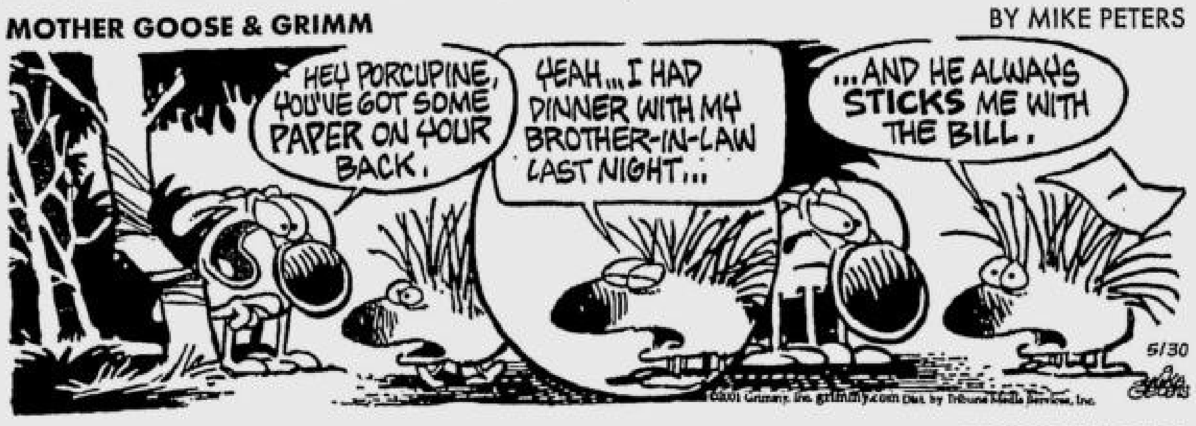
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


HEY PORCUPINE, YOU'VE GOT SOME PAPER ON YOUR BACK.
YEAH... I HAD DINNER WITH MY BROTHER-IN-LAW LAST NIGHT...
...AND HE ALWAYS STICKS ME WITH THE BILL.
5/30
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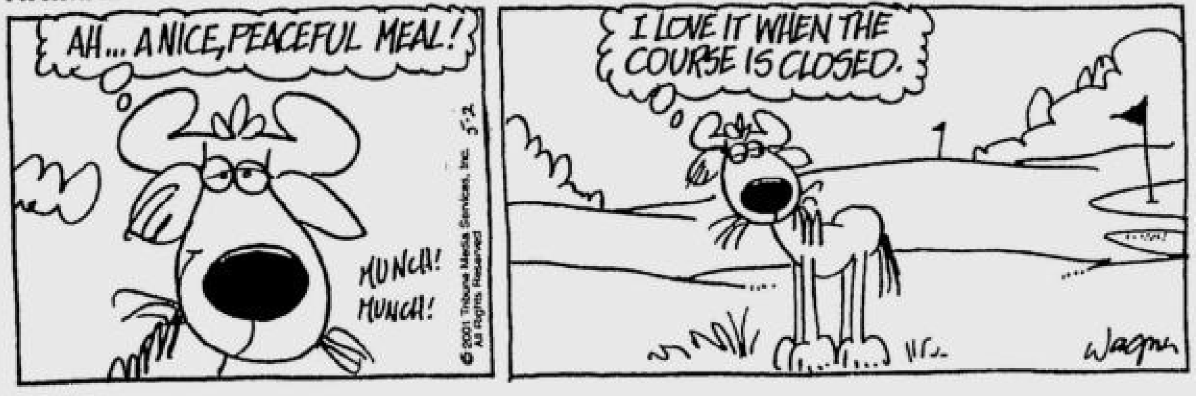
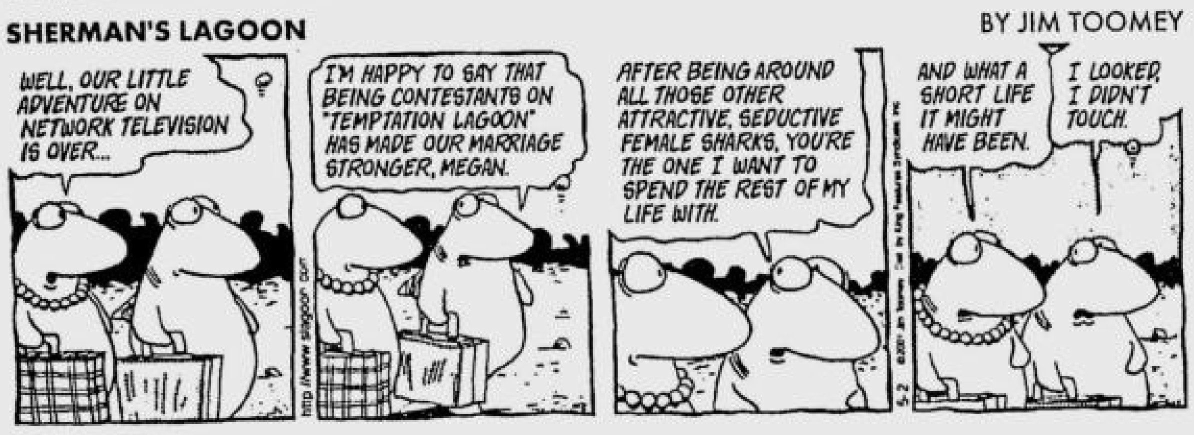
ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


AH... A NICE, PEACEFUL MEAL!
MUNCH! MUNCH!
© 2001 Tribune Media Services, Inc. All Rights Reserved
5-2
I LOVE IT WHEN THE COURSE IS CLOSED.
Wagner

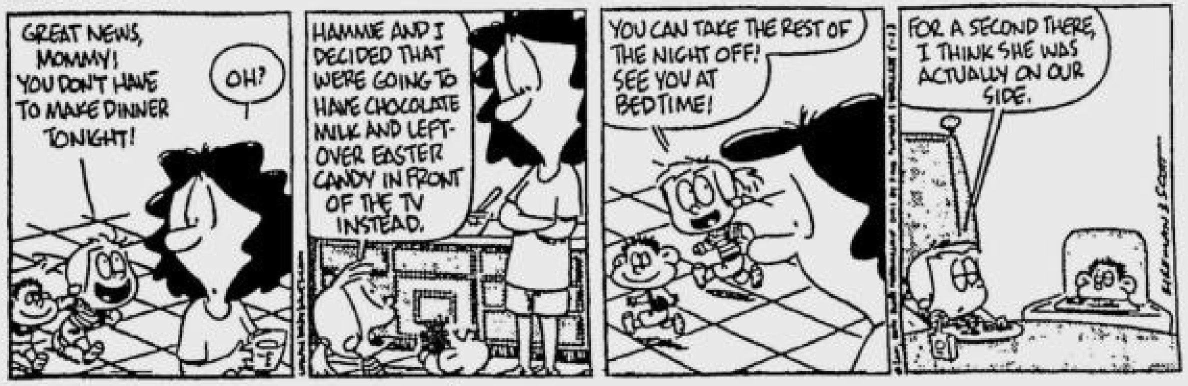
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


WELL, OUR LITTLE ADVENTURE ON NETWORK TELEVISION IS OVER...
I'M HAPPY TO SAY THAT BEING CONTESTANTS ON "TEMPTATION LAGOON" HAS MADE OUR MARRIAGE STRONGER, MEGAN.
http://www.slagoon.com
AFTER BEING AROUND ALL THOSE OTHER ATTRACTIVE, SEDUCTIVE FEMALE SHARKS, YOU'RE THE ONE I WANT TO SPEND THE REST OF MY LIFE WITH.
5-2
AND WHAT A SHORT LIFE IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.
I LOOKED, I DIDN'T TOUCH.

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


GREAT NEWS, MOMMY! YOU DON'T HAVE TO MAKE DINNER TONIGHT!
OH?
HAMMIE AND I DECIDED THAT WE'RE GOING TO HAVE CHOCOLATE MILK AND LEFT-OVER EASTER CANDY IN FRONT OF THE TV INSTEAD.
YOU CAN TAKE THE REST OF THE NIGHT OFF! SEE YOU AT BEDTIME!
FOR A SECOND THERE, I THINK SHE WAS ACTUALLY ON OUR SIDE.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Sandra Bernhard, Bjorn Borg, Max Casella, Amanda Pays, Harvey Fierstein

Happy Birthday: Romance and new friendships will be the focus this year. You will attract partners and admirers with your outgoing nature and colorful, witty style. You will excel the most by contributing to groups you believe in. Generosity will be the downfall if you don't put a limit on what you're willing to give. Your numbers: 3, 19, 28, 33, 37, 45

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Put your high energy to good use. Sports activities will help you eliminate stress and tension. You will tempt potential lovers with your daredevil, devil-may-care attitude.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Better take advantage of any moneymaking proposals that come your way. You've been overspending. If you want to maintain your standard of living, you're going to have to earn more.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Partnerships are a problem. Keep your ears peeled. Someone you thought you were close to is not telling the truth. It would be a good idea to start asking questions before it's too late.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Work will be hectic but rewarding as long as you don't get involved with other people's problems. Someone you live with may lose his or her temper if you don't pull your weight.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You're thinking like the proverbial Texan again: too much, too fast, too big. Pull on the reins before you lose control of everything you've got. Sudden changes will be drastic and irrevocable.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Don't become involved in unstable partnerships. Anger will mount if someone isn't up-front with you. Set standards and make sure that you stick to them.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You can make lasting connections. Spend time on the activities that you enjoy most. Don't let friction at work stand in the way of your emotional well-being. Co-workers won't be on your side.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Implementing those innovative ideas you've been mulling over will result in extra cash. Talk to a friend who knows about marketing.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You'll be blowing situations out of proportion. Your partner will be confused by your actions and words. Find a constructive outlet for your frustration.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Don't expect to hear the whole truth about the changes taking place at work. You'll have to read between the lines if you want to figure out whether or not you should be looking for a new job.

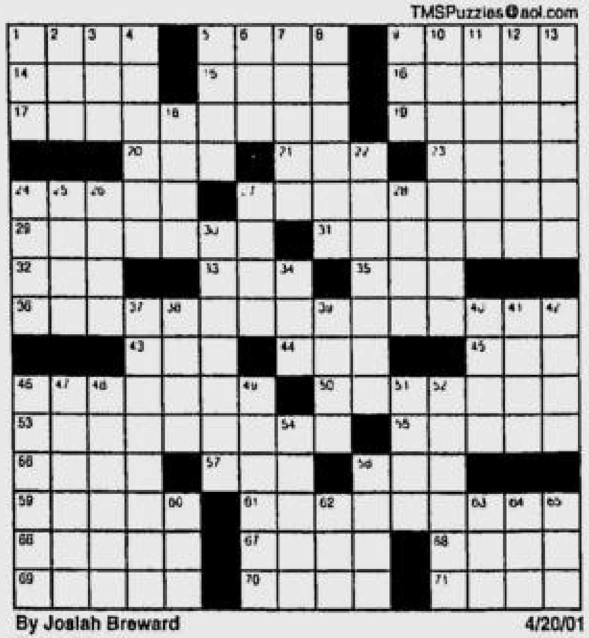
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Discuss your professional objectives with superiors, apply for a new position, or ask for a raise. Your intuition and intelligence will help you earn favors and achieve your goals.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You have an unrealistic view of your position and importance. Someone may be using you or setting you up for a big fall. Proceed with caution and don't sign anything that might be binding.

Birthday Baby: You are quite the entertainer, able to manipulate and please a crowd. You are energetic, playful and easygoing. Your wide-ranging interests and clever approach enhance everything you do.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Josiah Breward
Scranton, PA

4/20/01

ACROSS
1 Buddies
5 Bryn __
9 Guam port, once
14 Baghdad's land
15 Popular cookie
16 Philanthropist
17 Stephen King short story set in London
19 Rocker John
20 4/15 addressee
21 Nov. follower
23 Founder of Carthage
24 Broadcast talent org.
27 Game played against steps
29 "Hunters in the Snow" painter
31 Swerved
32 Continental hours: abbr.
33 Essence
35 Make a blunder
36 Claim on public lands
43 Barn bellow
44 Profound dread
45 Small islet
46 Platitudes
50 Fertility goddess
53 Notre Dame's bellringer
55 Charged particle
56 Quechuan ruler
57 Aged agcy.
58 Arch
59 Gives the cold shoulder to
61 Soft headwear with a broad, flexible brim
66 Uncle Miltie
67 Actress Arden, casually
68 Wonderstruck exclamations
69 Ms. DeGeneres
70 Count (on)
71 Hint or trace

DOWN
1 Brief photo
2 LAX info
3 Tai language
4 Lady's escort
5 Scale for minerals
6 Exist
7 George of "Cheers"
8 Cowboy contests
9 Citrus drink
10 Whoopi
11 Upas tree poison
12 Brain box
13 Infamous traitor
18 Rocky outcrop
22 Sticks
24 Fundamentals
25 Radio fig.
26 Ballerina's skirt
27 Twist sideways
28 Persian fairy
30 Puts in a pyramid
34 Lingerie buy
37 Friendly
38 Nonsense!
39 Letters on love letters
40 Mata __
41 Josip Broz
42 Anna of "Nana"
46 Pyramus' lover
47 Brook
48 Straighten ringlets
49 One prone to backtalk
51 Bath powder
52 Regardless
54 Have a cow?
58 Chop __
60 Bigwig in D.C.
62 Castor or olive follower
63 __ polloi
64 Companion of 68A
65 Recipe meas.

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

G	L	U	T	■	A	S	P	E	N	■	H	O	B	O
E	U	R	O	■	S	T	A	L	E	■	A	H	E	M
M	A	G	E	N	T	A	W	I	T	H	R	A	G	E
S	U	E	■	E	E	L	S	■	■	A	A	R	O	N
■	■	■	B	A	R	K	■	B	A	S	S	E	T	S
S	H	E	A	R	S	■	B	O	L	T	S	■	■	■
I	A	M	B	■	■	L	O	O	S	E	■	O	P	T
L	I	M	E	E	Y	E	D	M	O	N	S	T	E	R
T	R	Y	■	N	A	V	E	S	■	■	T	I	R	E
■	■	■	E	R	R	E	D	■	T	R	I	C	K	Y
B	A	R	C	O	D	E	■	T	I	E	R	■	■	■
A	T	O	L	L	■	■	S	I	G	N	■	W	E	B
C	O	B	A	L	T	I	N	T	H	E	F	A	C	E
K	N	O	T	■	A	D	U	L	T	■	A	C	H	E
S	E	T	S	■	R	O	B	E	S	■	R	O	O	T

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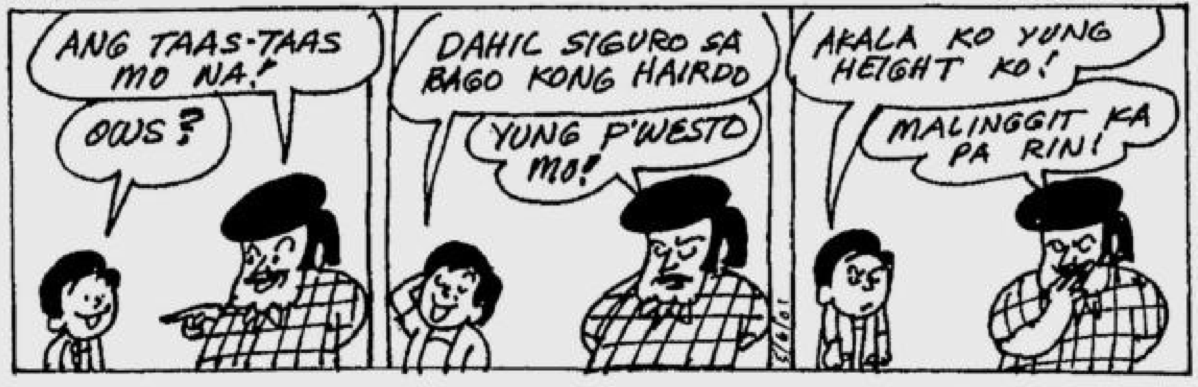
4/20/01

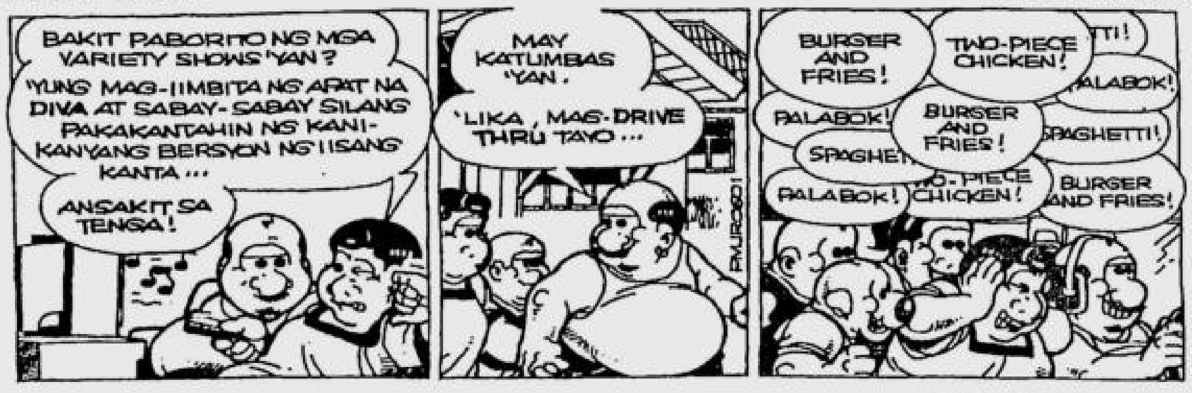
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ANG TAAS-TAAS MO NA!
OWS?
DAHIL SIGURO SA BAGO KONG HAIRDO
YUNG P'WESTO MO!
AKALA KO YUNG HEIGHT KO!
MALINGGIT KA PA RIN!

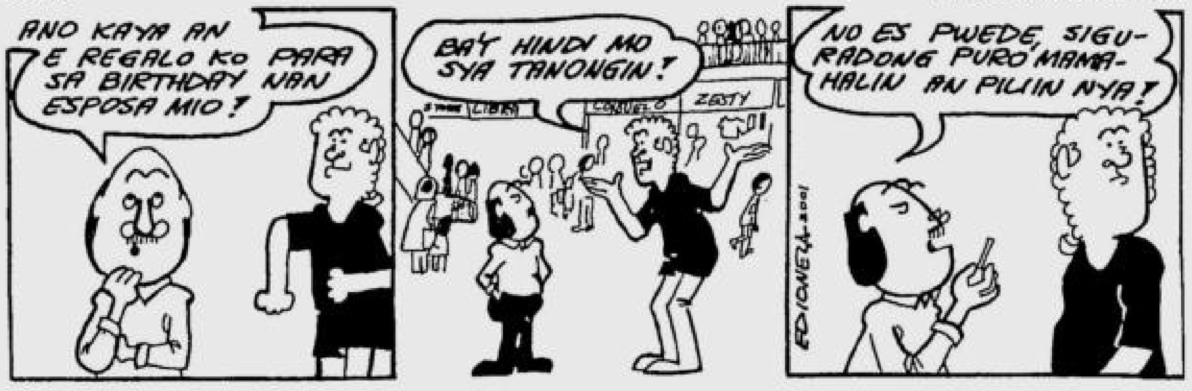
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


BAKIT PABORITO NG MGA VARIETY SHOWS 'YAN?
'YUNG MAG-IIMBITA NG APAT NA DIVA AT SABAY-SABAY SILANG PAKAKANTAHIN NG KANI-KANYANG BERSYON NG IISANG KANTA...
ANSAKIT SA TENGA!
MAY KATUMBAS 'YAN.
'LIKA, MAG-DRIVE THRU TAYO...
PMJR
BURGER AND FRIES!
TWO-PIECE CHICKEN!
PALABOK!
SPAGHETTI!
BURGER AND FRIES!
SPAGHETTI!
PALABOK!
TWO-PIECE CHICKEN!
BURGER AND FRIES!

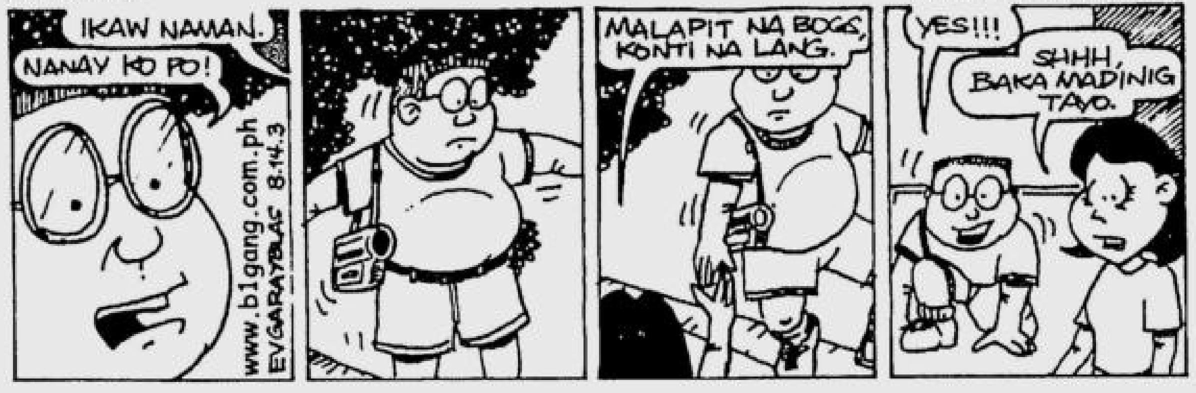
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


ANO KAYA AN E REGALO KO PARA SA BIRTHDAY NAN ESPOSA MIO?
BA'T HINDI MO SYA TANONGIN?
LIBRI
CONSUELO
ZESTY
EDIONELA 2001
NO ES PWEDE, SIGURADONG PURO MAMAHALIN AN PILIIN NYA!

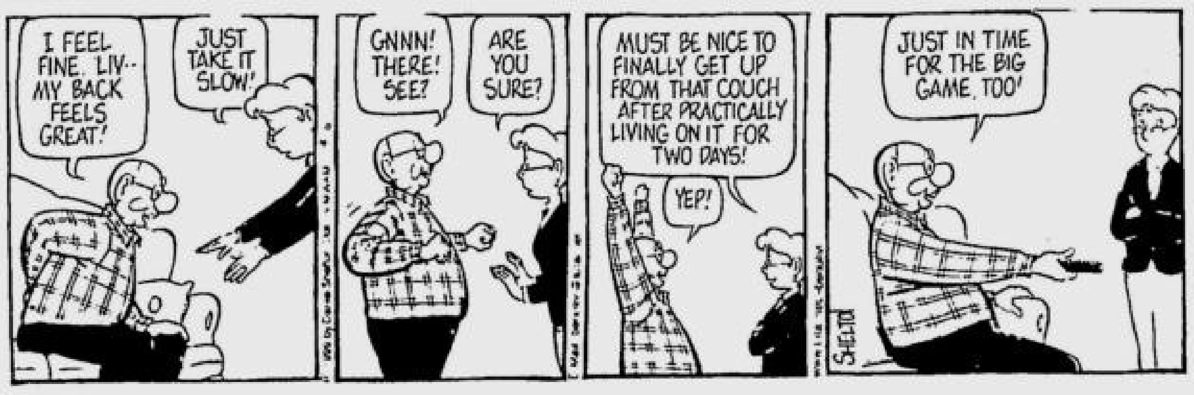
B1 GANG

BY ATS11/ JEA/ FEVG


IKAW NAMAN.
NANAY KO PO!
www.b1gang.com.ph
EVGARAYBLAS 8.14.3
MALAPIT NA BOSS, KONTI NA LANG.
YES!!!
SHHH, BAKA MADINIG TAYO.

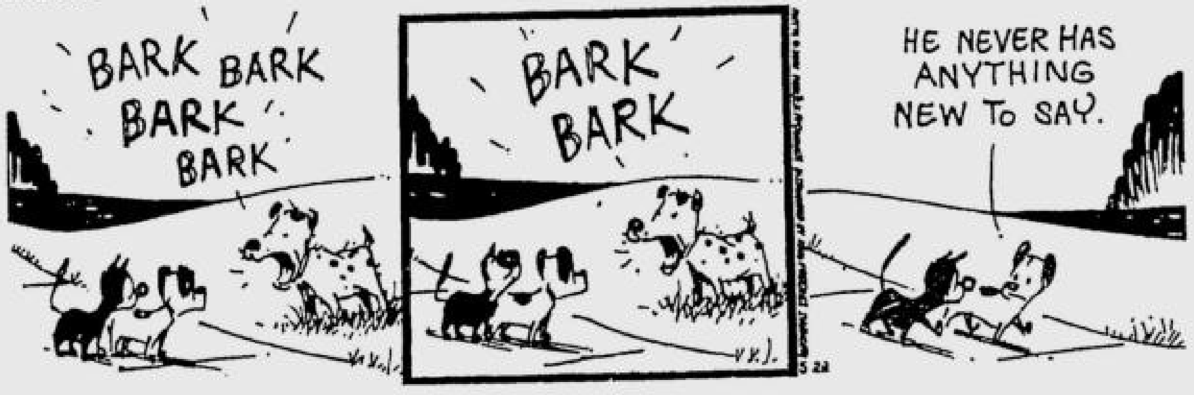
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


I FEEL FINE, LIV.. MY BACK FEELS GREAT!
JUST TAKE IT SLOW!
GNNN! THERE! SEE?
ARE YOU SURE?
MUST BE NICE TO FINALLY GET UP FROM THAT COUCH AFTER PRACTICALLY LIVING ON IT FOR TWO DAYS!
YEP!
JUST IN TIME FOR THE BIG GAME, TOO!
SHELTON

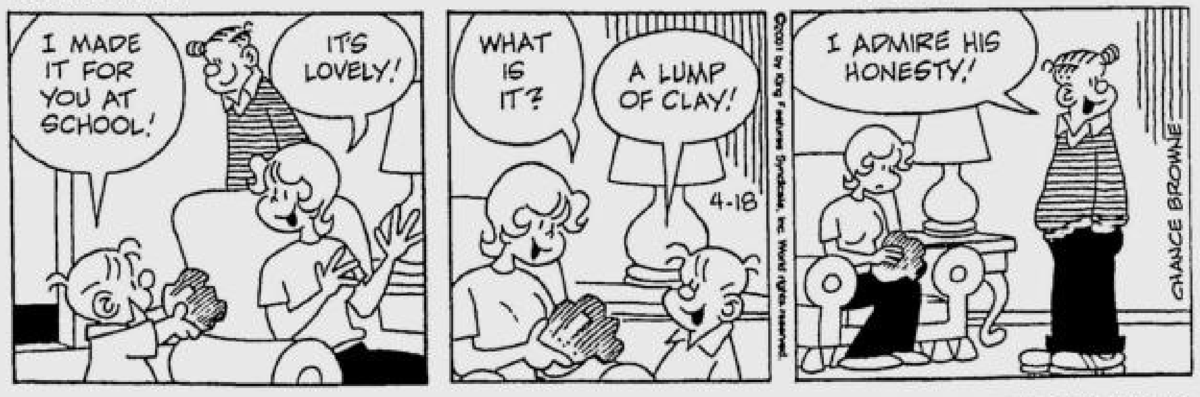
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


BARK BARK BARK BARK
BARK BARK
HE NEVER HAS ANYTHING NEW TO SAY.
5 22

HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


I MADE IT FOR YOU AT SCHOOL!
IT'S LOVELY!
WHAT IS IT?
A LUMP OF CLAY!
4-18
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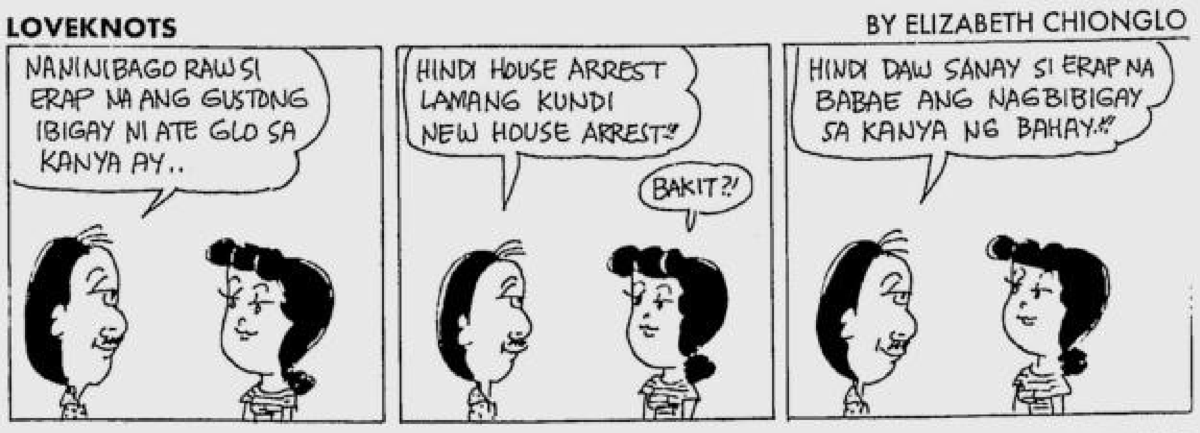
I ADMIRE HIS HONESTY!
CHANCE BROWNE

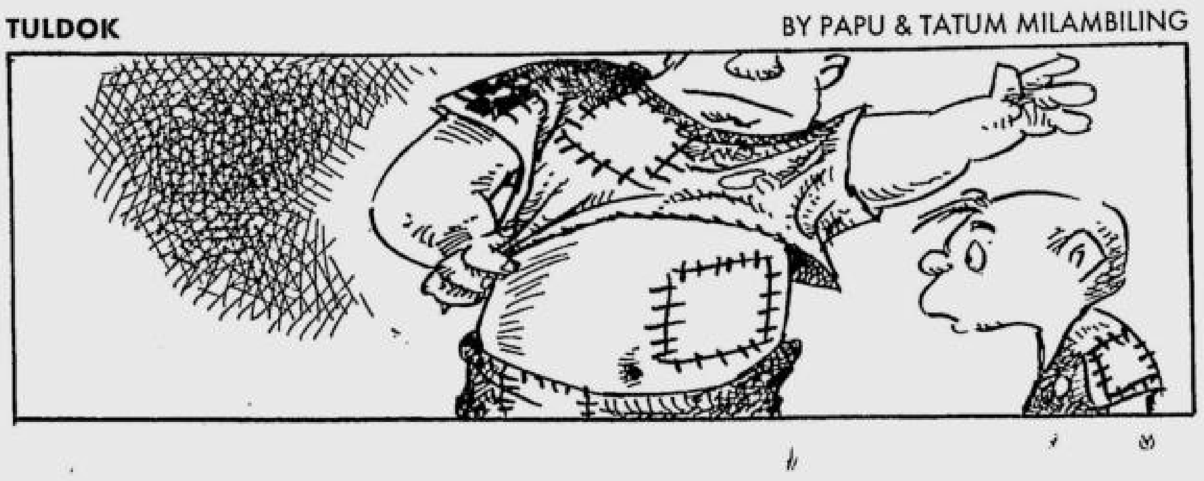
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


NANINIBAGO RAW SI ERAP NA ANG GUSTONG IBIGAY NI ATE GLO SA KANYA AY..
HINDI HOUSE ARREST LAMANG KUNDI NEW HOUSE ARREST!!
BAKIT?!
HINDI DAW SANAY SI ERAP NA BABAE ANG NAGBIBIGAY SA KANYA NG BAHAY!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING



2bU • to be young • to be you • to be you • To be you • to be young

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

The hunt is on

By Lesmes Solanoy

MIKKI wakes up early that Monday morning. After doing her morning routine, she puts on her best business dress and gathers the materials she'll need that day. Mikki collects the papers she painstakingly typed, proofread and printed the other night. And before leaving the house, she makes sure everything is in her compiler: her ID photos, school documents, pen and of course, an ample amount of money.

No, Mikki isn't going to school. Neither will she be heading for work. On the contrary, she will be looking for one. After graduating last April, this young woman will begin the journey called job-hunting. She will be among the 300,000 graduates this year (and of course, add those who graduated the years before and have yet to land a job) who will be trooping to various job fairs, scouring the busy streets of Ayala and Ortigas, burning telephone lines and surfing the Net till the wee hours of the morning, all in pursuit of a possible work.

Hopefully, she and the others won't end up inflating the already high unemployment rate of the country.

To do that, preparation is necessary. And what better way to prepare than by taking pointers from those who have been to the wonderful yet exhausting world of job-hunting. So meet Mario Tani, Steph Chua, Nami Sanchez and Eyen Paune, all certified job-hunters, except for Eyen who's already part of the working force.

Know thyself first

Socrates said so and Mario couldn't agree less. "Assess yourself first. Be clear with what you want and with what you can do." Wanting and liking the job is a must but wanting is just half of it. One must also consider what he or she is capable of. Also, don't forget what you have learned in college, you wouldn't want those four or more years of majoring wasted, would you?

Eyen, a marketing management graduate, has been job-hunting for a month now. With her specialization, she is deadset on penetrating the advertising world. "That is what I want and that is where I hope to be in," she asserts. Same goes with Nami, also a marketing degree holder, who had consistently pursued a career in marketing and who is now working in the marketing department in one of the manufacturing firms in the country.

What you will need

No one beats a well-equipped soldier. If a warrior has his weapon, a job-hunter has his resumé. Short and simple should do the trick. It should be accurate enough to show your strengths and qualifications. Never lie and never overstate. "In an interview, the interviewer is going to check the truthfulness of everything written down in the resumé," says Eyen. Of course, it has to be printed on a clean and presentable sheet of paper.

As early as now, start lining up the Registrar's Office to get the TOR or the Transcript of Records. Almost all companies ask for it, some even require the original copy. So get as many copies as possible and have them duplicated. Then, make sure you have loads of ID photos with you, and if possible, it should come in different sizes: 1 x 1, 1.5 x 1.5, 2 x 2. You'll never know what a company would ask.

Next comes the clothing. When Mario started job-hunting, he was always in dark long pants, long-sleeved polo shirt and tie. Steph, on the other hand, recommends a three-piece suit for the ladies: skirt, blouse and blazer. Again simplicity is the key.

Where to find jobs

There is still the old reliable classified ad in the dailies. But relying on them alone is a thing of the past. Nowadays, everyone has to be proactive. That is why walk-ins and job fairs have become the in thing in job-hunting.

Colleges usually hold job expos for their students. Sometimes, even outside firms organize their own like the INQUIRER's JobMarket. This year, the INQUIRER already held two career fairs at the Glorietta.

The Internet also provides a comfortable way of looking for jobs. Several job sites are already online: Jobsdb.com, Jobstreet.com, HanapBuhay.com, JobMarketOnline.com, Workants.com and others. Just upload the resumé and create an account with them. The next thing you'll know, job opening updates have been flooding your e-mail. Make sure, though, that you regularly check your mailbox.

However, the success rate varies. "It works," according to Nami. "I have received calls and replies from my applications online." Steph isn't as lucky. She hasn't received a single reply from her applications online.

Thus, it is always better to explore all the avenues in job-hunting. Many of those who have actually been hired tried out all the available media.

There may be other ways of job-searching. Your own network of friends can be your pass to that job you're after. Who knows, maybe just by watching TV or listening to the radio or hanging out in your favorite places, you may actually end up having a job. Remember to keep your eyes and ears open.

The walk and the wait

But more often than not, jobs don't find their way to you, you have to find a way to the jobs. So get those feet walking and that body moving. Many of the jobseekers today go building-hopping. They go to a building, like 6750 in Makati which houses several companies, and leave their portfolios with the Human Resources or Recruitment Department of each firm. It's as simple as that. A word of caution though. While this practice may be common, it is not always productive. It is because most of these companies either don't have current job openings or have ordered a freeze hiring.

But wait, yes, wait. Sooner or later, these companies will have openings.

Steph, for example, did her walk-ins last January, and it was only last May when her phone rang almost endlessly with companies scheduling her for interviews or testing. As they say, it comes when you least expect it. "If you plan to have a job in the earliest possible time, then start your walk-ins right now," she adds. Patience, perseverance and hard work will get you in. Of course, you also need that desire and the talent for the job. But in everything, one has to have the guts. With the competition and the current economic plight, everyone will be after the same job. As Eyen puts it, "*Palakasan ng loob ang labanan dyan.*"

In the end, no guts, no glory, no job. Good luck and happy hunting!

Of dreams and the choices we make

By Veronica B. de Luna

I'VE never held on to a job for more than 10 months. But I've never been fired. Chalk it up to restlessness or dissatisfaction. Or maybe I simply had no idea what on earth I wanted, something not unusual for someone who breezed through college on a trimestral program. Add to that a degree I chose which I didn't give any serious thought to, realizing too late that it was just an institutionalized academic excuse for trite political discourse and empty philosophical rhetoric. You leave the classroom after a period of heated debate on Marx's dialectical materialism, riding high on an intellectual trip which soon subsides as soon as you leave the gates of the university and the sorry sight of shanties and undernourished kids peddling their wares on the street mar your rose-tinted glasses.

So, what has all these got to do with my self-imposed exile from the rat race? Well, the connection is a bit hazy but I have the unsettling feeling that my inability to stay on the job owes to the fact that I haven't really been doing what I actually like. Unfortunately, the degree I earned allows me only the kind of work that requires little imagination and plenty of discipline for following instructions and also, the tenacity to kiss ass, sometimes.

But there's one job I cherish and wish I should have kept. Right after graduation, I took up the university's offer to teach. It didn't pay much, only enough to sustain my Friday nights' Malate drinking cum philosophical waxing sprees. I was lucky though because I wasn't paying rent and still live off my parents. It was just a seven-month stint but up to this day, the experience still makes me feel I accomplished something tremendously important.

My first trimester as a teacher wasn't so bad; I credit myself for having managed to slide into the role with ease. I may not come to class with an armload of books and papers but I could always whip up the class to a frenzy with debates and discussions when the books get tiresome and tedious. The second term though, wasn't as successful. Most of the time, I felt my students only half-understood my lectures and tuned me out when they felt it was a futile attempt to catch on. I also had my share of raucous students who succeeded in making me feel on the verge of walking out. But I never pulled that one; I never gave them the satisfaction even if hell froze over.

Despite all these, the experience likewise had its share of rewards, such as the intellectual discourse I spontaneously triggered in class, the questions my students asked and the sincere, animated conversations that were ignited and carried on long after the period is over. Those were the times that I was able to somehow stoke the fires of wonder and wisdom, no matter how short-lived.

My peers expected me to land a more financially gratifying job. You know, the corporate kind where you're clad in one of those ridiculously pricey power suits (What exactly does that mean?), seated behind a granite-top desk, pounding on the keyboard of a Compaq laptop. But this is not Wallstreet. This is the Philippines and you don't just graduate from college and land a six-digit paying job the morning after. What's more, I couldn't picture myself out of my Levi's. At the University, I could just walk in to class in my faded blue jeans with a gaping hole on the knee and still be respected by my students.

Act of courage

Such experience has taught me that living out one's choice amidst raised eyebrows and frowns of disappointment is an act of courage, made doubly difficult if in the end it didn't turn out the way you figured it would. Yes, I had such high hopes. Teaching as a profession is grossly underrated. And it has not escaped my realization that I am, in fact, a product of such a sad development in the present state of the educational system. I think it was a wise thing to do—begging off from my job at a time when my senses had started to drift off to the unknown.

I discovered that teachers weren't given free range. Well, maybe just a little but you'd still have to work along the parameters of the department syllabus. Otherwise, you'd be labeled a radical, which is actually a compliment amidst an academically constricted environment.

So here I am, an erstwhile teacher of the amateur kind living a laid-back existence in some far-flung corner of the earth, unflinching at the woes of joblessness and the consequent possibility of poverty.

Explore your possibilities

I hope I am not sending the wrong signal. It's just a matter of knowing what you want and perhaps, if you don't have that yet, exploring your possibilities. Be oblivious to influences that do more harm than good. Watch out for those self-appointed intellectual guardians who come in the guise of seemingly well-meaning mentors or figures of authority who profess to know what is good for you. Steer clear of them. Hold your ground and guard your dreams. Because there'll be no one else to blame when you're at the end of your rope trying to please everyone. Sure, there's food on the table but whatever happened to that novel you swore you'd finish before you reach 30? At 25, I still have the good years on my side. I mean, I can still make mistakes and forgive myself. So what if I go crazy sometimes and walk barefoot under the rain on summer afternoons? Or seriously consider taking James Taylor 's advice and "go on up the roof and watch the stars put on a show for free?" I may flounder every now and then and I've been repeatedly chastised for it. I do not know that it is wrong to be unperturbed by the usual concerns of my generation. A high-paying job is not on the top of my list. Rather, I wish simply to be happy with my work, perhaps travel in the summer, and get this newspaper to publish my articles. A laptop would be nice, yes, and a Jaguar wouldn't hurt. I do not know that it is wrong to ponder at great lengths and contemplate on one's ideology and when the time is ripe, allow the same to work the necessary changes in one's life. I do not know that it is wrong to refuse to budge and do what the mainstream culture requires of me to be considered successful.

I'm now on the throes of finishing my second degree. After so many unsuccessful attempts at cracking the career milieu, I have gone back to school. The luxury of time had served me well. With teaching temporarily stowed under the ladder of my many passions, I will spend hours with pen and paper and try to awaken the poet inside who was silenced a long time ago by the deafening noise of a pseudo-civilized society. It's not a living, I know. But it's a life. And it promises to be a damn good one.

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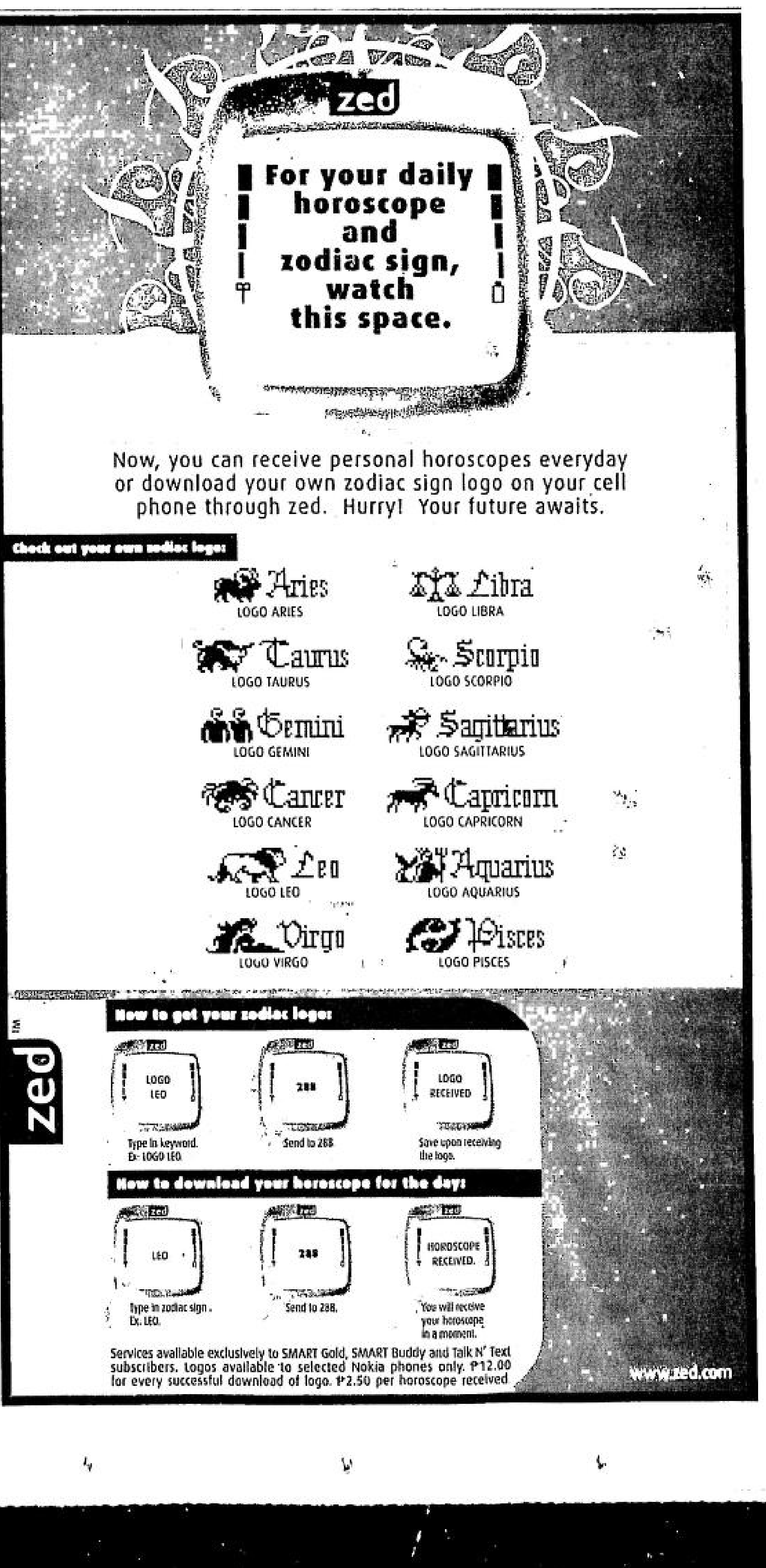

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To young Pinoys abroad, the world is not enough

Meet a 12-year-old Fil-Australian Olympic torchbearer and a 22-year-old Fil-American dynamo

BY TESA ARCILLA

WHEN asked how they see themselves in the future, young people of today no longer content themselves with replies like "I want to be a doctor, a lawyer, or a businessman." Instead, they reply with phrases like "make a difference," "save a life" or "conquer the world."

Times have indeed changed. The youths have evolved from being mere "potentially" successful adults to being "actual" achievers regardless of how young they may be. We marvel at the successes of young Filipinos as entrepreneurs, athletes, artists, musicians and writers.

Olympic pride

However, it is also a fact that we Filipinos have always had the capacity to compete with the rest of the world, whether we purposely do so or not (think "Iloveyou" virus and you'll know what I mean). Whatever country we head for, we cannot help but shine above the rest. Here are two of our young Filipinos who have set their minds on conquering the world.

Although people always say that in every competition, what matters is the experience and not whether one wins or loses, the number of medals a team gets may still be a big thing for most people. However, a 12-year-old boy set out to prove that despite the fuss over winning medals, anyone can make their country proud in his or her own way.

Although an ordinary boy, Paolo Conanan has done something worthy of a gold medal. For the many people who aren't aware, this boy was one of the last torchbearers before the Olympic flame was carried into the grand stadium. For a kid like him, it was simply a dream come true.

JOSEPH Carluen Marmol with members of the Iskwelahang Pilipino: Rondalla of Boston

The son of a postmaster and a housewife, Paolo knows the value of hard work. He lives his life believing that he does not have to be extraordinary for him to be able to accomplish something that is. Paolo's intelligence is evident from the moment you start a conversation with him and when asked about what he thinks of his accomplishment, he smiles and straightforwardly says, "I'm proud of myself."

How he became a torchbearer was a long process, and actually being chosen was completely unexpected. In a national essay-writing contest involving elementary students of New South Wales, Australia, only five were chosen. The students wrote their essays thinking it was only a seatwork for English class, but Paolo gave it his best shot nonetheless. His essay, titled "The Day I Carried the Olympic Torch," goes:

"I can still remember a time when I was only 12. A moment I will never forget. My name is Paolo Conanan. I was just an ordinary boy. I can hardly believe I'm here. Number 10,000 of 11,000 torchbearers I am standing in front of countless policemen, thousands of news reporters and media people in the background.

"I can see my family and friends as well, trying to encourage me. It is cold, as cold as in 1993 when I was 5, and heard the words 'The winner is Sydney.' I was proud—so proud that my country was going to be a part of a worldwide event. As I wait for the other torch to come light my torch, I think about why I am here. What did I do to deserve this? I hope I am representing thousands of people just like me. I believe that everyone who was chosen to carry the torch doesn't have to be famous or rich or athletic because we are all equal and unique in our own way, no matter who we are, what we've done or where we come from. It's just as the first torchbearer Nova Peris Kneebone said: 'If you believe, you will achieve!' My own suburb of Auburn sponsored me to do this. Auburn isn't known worldwide but deep within my heart I know it is as good as New York itself. I won't let my suburb down! For everyone in Auburn, here I go! The day I carried the torch is an experience I will never forget!"

I am way past 12 years of age, but I couldn't have said it any better!

Conquering the East Coast

For the past few years, the presence of Filipino-Americans in our society has been increasingly felt because of their success in sports and the entertainment industry, among others. Back in the United States, Filipino-Americans continue to excel and earn respect and recognition not only from fellow Filipino-Americans, but also from the culturally diverse American community.

I met Joseph Carluen Marmol in a university three years ago when he was on a performance tour with the Iskwelahang Pilipino: Rondalla of Boston. From that time until today, his achievements and credentials continue to pile up. He was born and raised in Boston, Massachusetts, and only comes to visit the Philippines once in a while. In high school, he was active in soccer, lacrosse, alpine ski team and social committee; he was a peer leader for student retreats and a member of campus ministry. He also volunteered full-time at the hospital where his mother works as a volunteer; this was for his senior service project before he graduated.

He is currently an incoming senior at the Northeastern University in Boston where he is completing his degree in BS History with a minor in Political Science.

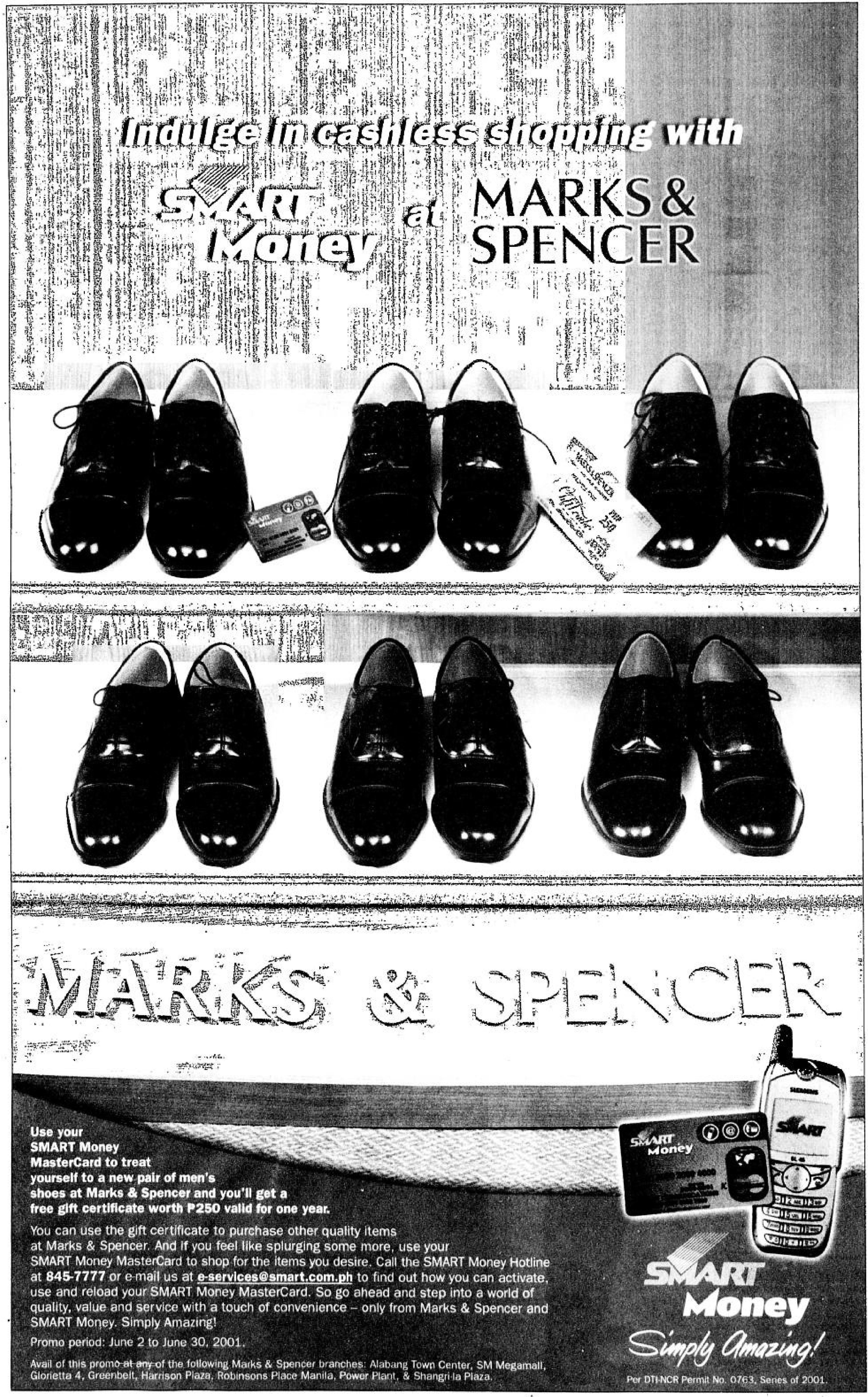
His participation in the Iswelahang Pilipino: Rondalla of Boston, the first and oldest cultural school of its kind in the US, has given him the opportunity to travel all over America and Europe. The performances of the group are an extension of the Iskwelehang Pilipino's music program, and Joseph has performed across America, Europe and the Philippines. He has also performed for former Presidents Cory Aquino and Fidel Ramos.

Aside from being a musician, he is also an active youth leader. He is currently the national public relations officer of the Filipino Intercollegiate Networking Dialogue (FIND), whose purpose is to promote unity and cooperation of Filipino students in East Coast colleges, universities, vocational, and technical schools. The young Filipino college students who grew up in the US have developed an ethnic consciousness apart from the identity imposed on them by their parents. The organization was founded by students, for students, and for some years now there have been annual FIND conferences. During conferences, they have discussion groups, parties, bands and cultural performances, among others.

Joseph has served in FIND's national steering committee. He was public relations director of the 1999 FIND Conference at Harvard University. There he made connections that resulted in the largest attendance of delegates ever in FIND's history. His work has helped expand FIND even to the Philippines. He will soon be featured on the ABS-CBN International television show "Stateside."

This month his term ends as vice president of Barkada, the Filipino students' organization at Northeastern University. As vice president, he served as a liaison for external affairs, linking with other Filipino student groups in the many colleges of Boston.

At 22, Joseph has indeed gone a long way. He plans to work in an investment bank or a law firm and enter the military as a naval intelligence officer. After serving his country he will go straight to law school, but as I said, today's Filipino youth will not stop at being a lawyer, a doctor or a businessman. Take it from Joseph—he plans to take over the world, but he stops and thinks again, maybe not, because for him and many other young Filipino's everywhere, "the world is not enough..."



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LIFESTYLE

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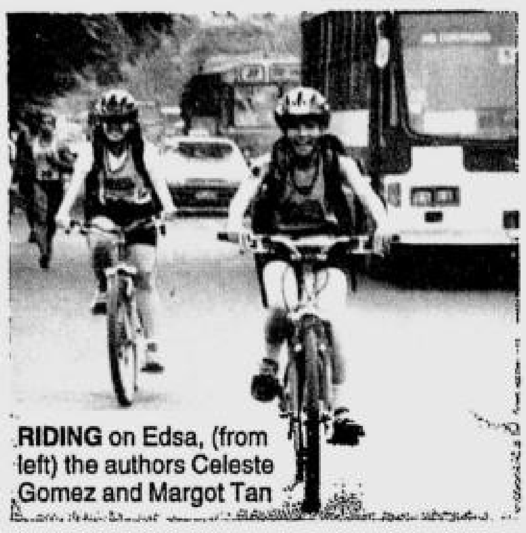
A TALE OF TWO MONKEYS

2bU! joins wacky races

In a sudden streak of masochism, 2bU! couch potatoes join the Urban Jungle Adventure Race and find out that the spirit is willing, but the limbs are weak and a little bit rusty

BY CELESTE GOMEZ AND MARGOT TAN



RIDING on Edsa, (from left) the authors Celeste Gomez and Margot Tan

GUTS, and how else could we put it? *Kapal ng mukha?*

Those were the only two things we had. We did not have a background on adventure racing. We did not have intensive training or *any* training at all, for that matter. We did even have a team. Not knowing the real deal about this kind of competition, we mustered enough courage and dared to enter into the world of adventure sports.

The Urban Jungle Adventure Race, the country's first, was definitely not your typical "fun run." Together with San Mig Light, it was especially organized for the launching of PinoyCentral's Adventure Sports section in its website. At least 240 participants and more than 40 teams braved the special course designed by no less than Thumbie Remigio, a champion adventure racer and team captain of the first all-Filipino team that grabbed the second spot in the international adventure race in Sabah, Malaysia.

Two distinct events were set up—one for the Elite category and another for the Fun category. The teams that took part in the 100-km overnight race in the Elite category did a biathlon of running and biking, kayaking and rubber tube paddling, rappelling, tyrolean crossing, wall climbing and games of wit and humor. For us nonserious "athletes," we barely lived through the 25-km fun course.

Pro inspiration

Earlier, in spite of our efforts, we still lacked members for our team. We raided the race briefing and kick-off party at Grilla, Libis on May 30, hoping to grab anyone who wanted to join two inexperienced females in the game. While scouting around for potential players, we found ourselves among the crowd of *real* adventure-sport racers, all ready and geared up as if the race were to start right after the party.

The Sandugo all-female team represented by Noelle Wenceslao, Janet Belarmino, Michelle Henares, Len Escalante, Junie Santos and Kim Gomez was the only one of its kind in the Elite category. Unlike all the other teams, Sandugo felt no pressure whatsoever. "*Kung matalo* okay *lang. Kung manalo eh 'di sikat,*" Noelle, the team captain,

2bU!/ p. E4

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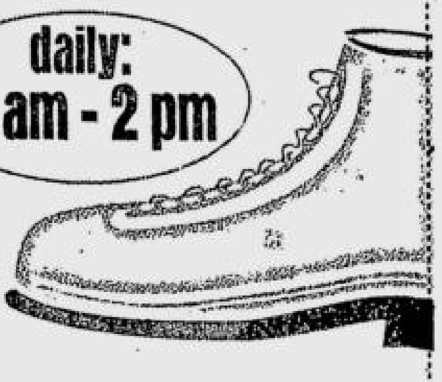

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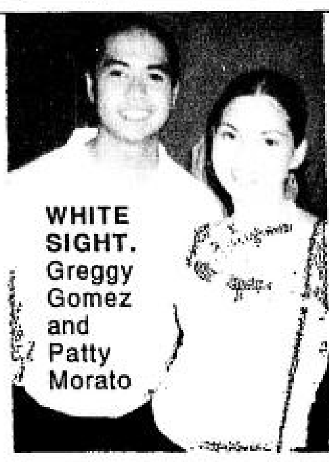
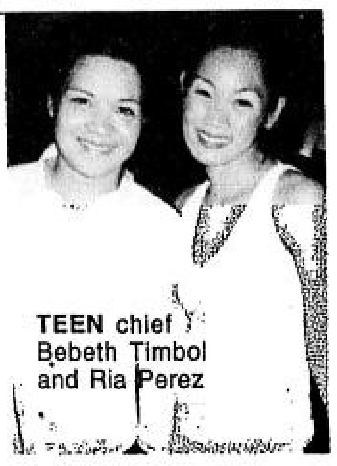
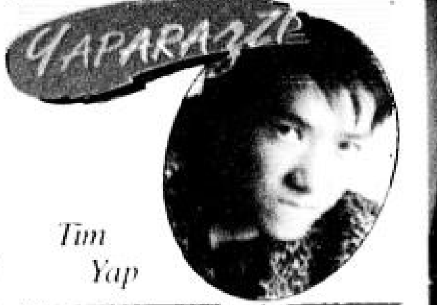
MEN IN WHITE. Mike Toledo and Atom Henares

WHITE PICKS. Ciara Sevilla and Gino dela Paz


WHITE SIGHT. Greggy Gomez and Patty Morato


TEEN chief Bebeth Timbol and Ria Perez

White hot night!



Tim Yap

Manila is feeling sha-na-na because of Po Na Na

IT was a scene straight from the party gates of heaven. Or okay, maybe a baptism, graduation, or worse, a detergent commercial—whatever it was, last week's majestic "White Night" opening party of night scene's latest sensation, Po Na Na, is one for the books!

FASHION'S "IT" GIRL. Rissa Samson

Po Na Na—which, according to the boys of Chrome Management, owners of the newest Acropolis, Libis hipspot, is a Mediterranean term for "This is life!" For dining, drinking and dancing demimondes, X marks the spot.

The evening started out with a press dinner, with VIPs from media circles in full attendance, all one in admiring the venue's cozy and intimate interiors and Moroccan touches hanging from the ceiling. Later, belly dancers appeared and "grooved" their way around.

From there, the owners were led downstairs for the ribbon-cutting. Leading the inauguration were special guests—style siren **Tessa Prieto-Valdes**, clad in a peacock-feathered white and turquoise gown, escorted by white-clad nightlife regalia **Louie Ysmael** and **EJ Litton**.

Hottest party ticket

Once up on its bronze stairway, you would be intrigued on what was in store, after the golden mirror and touches of broken glass in shades of green by the carpeted walk-way, it leads to a burly bouncer that opens the door—"Welcome to Po Na Na."

To say that this is one of summer's hottest party ticket would be an understatement. As early as 9 p.m., the place was a sea of white, gorgeous guys and gals all showing off their season's tans. Before midnight, I peeped out of the window and saw a long line of people forming outside, traffic was building up, seemed like Manila partyphiles were all curious for that Po Na Na experience.

People had to shove their way in—the place was way too full to let others inside. Guests without invites or who were not in the prescribed costume theme (as I have mentioned earlier, white) had to be turned away. To get in, aside from falling in line, one had to either name drop the owner or the promoter, or come up with some other "clever" way to outwit the door person.

Sample—"Why are you not in white?" Answer—"Oh, 'coz I came from another party, and the dress code was green." Despite it all (the crowds, the traffic and the heat and smoke), the scene that night felt so fresh—it was an event where the "veteran" party crowd (with all that "searching" for what's new in the scene) mixed with the young, vibrant (read: non-jaded) energy of the new blood.

SPUNK DUO. Celine Gabriel and Marga Montemayor

Hot, hot, hot

"How long will this last?" ask skeptical scenesters. A long time, I think. The Libis (the territory from Acropolis to Eastwood) party strip's present boom came on its own, without preparation or hype, it became hot and happening—not in one day, but months, even years. Via good word of mouth, it even became hotter. Already, I know of a lot of people opening up new bars and restaurants in the zone.

But what makes this newest watering hole land in the city's party map is not the fact that it has fine food nor chi chi interiors. Not even its rhythmic tunes (from house anthems to progressive chants, spun by DJs **Angelo de Dios**, **Dodge dela Paz** and **Edwin Peña**) could lay sole claim to its sudden success.

What really gave its hipsters seal of approval is the fact that Po Na Na is a place that offers all of the above without the "stuffy attitude" that other establishments try to put on. Po Na Na does not exert effort in looking hip or cool—it just is

FEATHERED FAIRY. Anna of Cal Carrie's

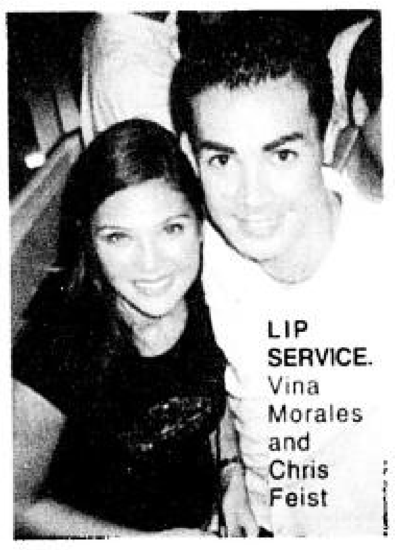
FRESH FINDS. Myda Prieto, Nina Ynares and Barbie Pardo

NEW model on the block sizzles

MEN AND CIGARS. Ish Montilla and Hans Montenegro

PHOTOS BY TIM YAP

CRÈME DE LA CRÈME. Robin da Roza


LIP SERVICE. Vina Morales and Chris Feist

STYLISH SIBLINGS. Martin and Rosanna Lopez

This week's hot events

Hip, young brand F&H (or Folded and Hung to you and me) opens its doors today, 5:30 p.m. at Glorietta 2. The store, owned by **Ronald Pineda**, has gained quite a youthful following through the years. Count on it to soar even higher—definitely a "must-watch-out-for" brand.

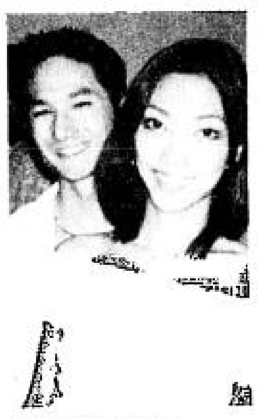
Also tonight at 6 p.m., we will know who the newest face of Teen will be. New editor in chief **Bebeth Timbol** leads Teen Magazine's Model search which happens at Siete Pecados at the Westin. From over a hundred girls, 10 finalists strut their stuff on the runway wearing Urban&Co., Milkwear, Sari-Sari, HerBench and Billabong by Stoked. Music will be from **Anton Ramos'** "Chill Out Project."

The space, formerly known as Gotham, is now CG2! Nope, it does not stand for "call girl" or anything salacious for that matter. It actually is short for Common Ground 2—the café slash bar slash club expands their horizons beginning tonight. It's also the Nakpil hangout's scintillating 2nd anniversary! For Common Ground regulars, expect the unexpected.

Tomorrow, Thursday, Bvlgari goes the "logo-mania" route to launch their leathergoods and B.zero 1 jewelry collection via Studio 54-inspired disco party! I heard they went to great lengths, even put up tents outside their store to get the feel of the yesteryears club.

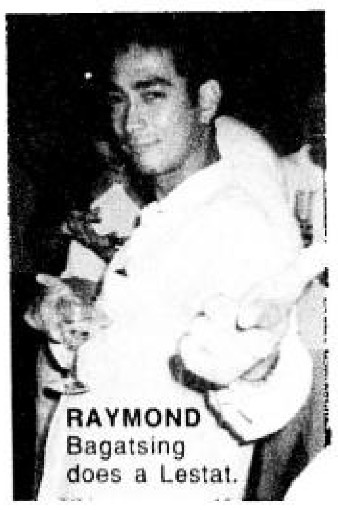
Friday, the MTV Pilipinas 2001 Awards night at the Edsa Shangri-la Hotel happens with only the best and the brightest in Pinoy music video-making competing for that ever-coveted music station trophy's Best New Artist, Best Group, Best Male, Best Female, Best Song, Best Director and Best Video. With a list of performers and presenters ranging from Parokya ni Edgar to **Randy Ortiz**, glam rock, here I come!

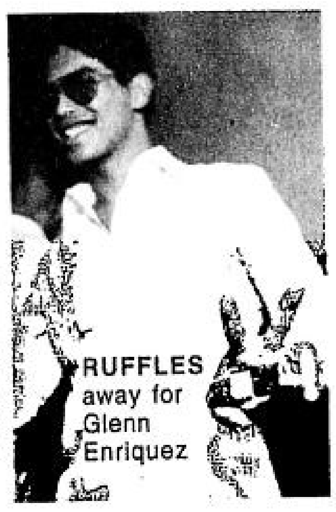
Well, whatever it is that you have planned out for your week, at the end of it all, make sure you are able to sit back, relax and say to yourself, "This is life!"


BEHIND THE SCENES were Kenji Marquez and Pazzy Navarro

WHITE LIGHT. Teray Garchitorena and Jenny Llamas

PO NA NA owners, Chrome Management pose with ribbon-cutters EJ Litton, Tessa Prieto-Valdes and Louie Ysmael.


RAYMOND Bagatsing does a Lestat.


RUFFLES away for Glenn Enriquez

WEBSITE OF THE WEEK

Not for the queasy-stomached

www.rotten.com

By Pam Pastor

WHEN hell is full, the dead will walk the earth." The website opens with this almost sinister greeting.

Yeah. Whatever, I thought, as I clicked on the page's first few links.

Minutes later, I was on the verge of throwing up, all thoughts of sarcasm forgotten.

2bU! correspondents Maui Reyes and Jason Doplito were right behind me, taking in one disgusting picture after another.

They started arguing over whether the photos were real. Fake or not, I can only say one thing. They were disgusting.

Yes. Disgusting pictures. This was rotten.com's key to cyberpopularity. Net addicts have been surfing the site's pages, eager to get a dose of weird photography—if you could call that photography.

They show pictures of almost everything—everything sick and groan-inducing, that is. In the few minutes we surfed, we saw photos of a person run over by a train, a dead bunny, shark attack victims, suicide victims, a man who burned to death on an electric post and numerous other corpses. There were also pictures of people eating babies.

I am not normally weak-hearted. I'm actually fascinated with forensics, even to the point of buying "Death Scenes," a book filled with black-and-white photos of corpses. But I have to draw the line somewhere. And rotten.com definitely crossed that line.

Other photos show a lame attempt at humor. "Size really does matter" was the caption for a picture of what might be the world's smallest penis. Oh-kay.

As if the gag-worthy photos they have in their archives are not enough, the site also offers links to other sites that feature more sick-o galleries. Want to see how Marilyn Monroe looked like when she died? What about JFK? Uh huh. Sick, indeed.

Aside from the photos, they have history tidbits—but not the type your teacher would want you to memorize. They also have "columns," a pathetic attempt at putting substance in the site.

While Net surfers enjoy their site, others have been clamoring in protest over the site's content. Teachers and parents have been complaining that their children have been bookmarking some of the site's photos. The site's defense? "The Internet is not a babysitter! Children should not be roaming the Internet unsupervised any more than they should be roaming the streets of New York City unsupervised. We cannot dumb the Internet down to the level of playground."

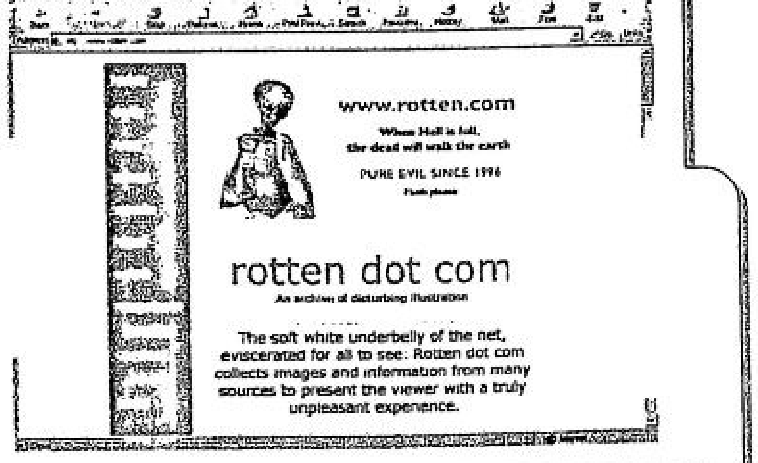
Rotten.com has also been slapped with one lawsuit threat after another. Some of the potential plaintiffs were Mattel (yes, the makers of Barbie), Pillsbury (yes, doughboy), a woman whose face was pasted on one of the more revealing photos and a family who was complaining that the photo of their nephew's decapitated head was used in the site. The site owners actually seem to be proud—even cocky—about all the attention they've been getting.

On the technical side, the site is easy to navigate and the photos upload quickly. There isn't much to say about the design, though. But then again, who cares about design when you're too busy reeling over the pictures?

The site's tagline reads "An archive of disturbing illustration." I'm sorry. Disturbing is a major understatement. This site really is rotten.

If you think your stomach can take it, go ahead and click over to the site. Don't say I didn't warn you.

E-mail the author at pammy-@exchange.ph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When Hell is full, the dead will walk the earth

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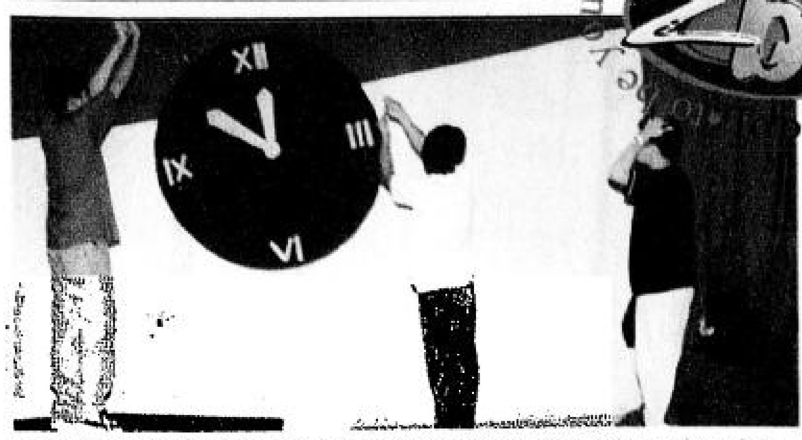
rotten dot com

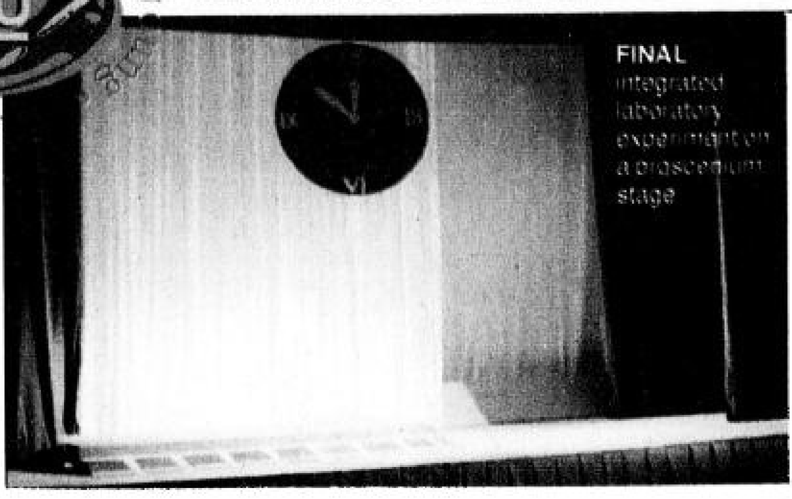
An archive of disturbing illustration

The soft white underbelly of the net, eviscerated for all to see: Rotten dot com collects images and information from many sources to present the viewer with a truly unpleasant experience.

www.rotten.com
Easter is cancelled, sorry kids



PARTICIPANTS in the set design and techniques module pratice what they've learned.



FINAL integrated laboratory experiment on a proscenium stage

BOBOT Lota (right) discussing elements of set design with participants

Summer designs

By Walter Ang

FOR CLOSE to two months, the Cultural Center of the Philippines became a sort of office and second home to me and a motley crew of diverse personalities and characters. With seven other individuals, I took the set design workshop. We commandeered the lobby of the Production Design Center every day for almost eight weeks. We drew floor plans and set design perspectives in the morning and worked on the Scene Shop building stages and sets in the afternoons.

The set design class was composed of an interesting mix of students, school-based technicians and community workers. We came to class bleary-eyed every morning to take in nuggets of set design wisdom from Bobot Lota, the set supervisor for the local production of "Miss Saigon."

The whole class had fantastic rapport and we got along gloriously with Bobot, who is fun and has a light, uncomplicated approach to teaching. He has a deceptively sneaky way of getting what he wants from you without being pushy, bitchy or getting dictatorial. You're sitting there with eyes wide open, wondering if you can draw or build the things he's describing as he talks to you and jokes around. Before you know it, he has coaxed you to get out of your shell and you're amazed you could actually produce what you've just done.

After an initial assessment, Bobot adjusted the course syllabus to suit the class' capabilities. Since most of us had a little background on visual arts, he upped the ante and made our class an advanced one. Under his eye, we spent hours drawing, measuring (a real pain, I assure you), mixing latex paints, hammering, sawing loads and loads of plywood, among other "glamorous" activities.

Light moments

Of course, it wasn't all heavy work. We spent an equal amount of hours sharing stories, making jokes, eating lunch together, talking about the elections, gossiping about actors and doing other, well, substantial activities.

We had guests from the industry who gave us talks and advice. One thing was apparent from what they shared. They encouraged workshops and formal training for theater practitioners since there is a dearth of skilled people in the Philippines. Eric Cruz, director of the Production Design Center, stressed that more people should know about the availability of workshops so they could learn more about the craft of set designing.

Apart from special lectures, we even had an educational trip (well, that's what they called it anyway) together with the lighting design class to historic Barasoain Church in Bulacan.

The trip was lovely and a great fun even though the weather wasn't as sunny as we hoped it would be. I was surprised to learn how near to the city this landmark is and how come my grade school never arranged a trip to the place. I was equally astonished to learn the interior was made of wood and not stone as the P10 bill would make it seem to be. By the way, the cat wasn't there.

We also got to visit the Church museum and experienced a neat light and sound show/exhibit. The hours after lunch were devoted to swimming at a nearby resort and bonding with the other class. And another round of gossip about actors.

Coming to an end

As the workshop drew to an end, all the other classes merged to come up with a culminating show of what we had learned. Along with dozens of other students taking workshops in lighting design, stage management, directing and a whole gamut of theater disciplines, we were like ants in a colony. Almost the entire complex was abuzz with activity. It was so filled with enthusiastic activity and hungry people that the cafeteria had to close early on our last day because it had run out of food by 4 p.m. Much to my shock and dismay, since I was completely famished by then. Poor me.

The teachers of the various classes were on hand to make sure we were on the right track. Even Eric would drop in every day, giving advice and suggestions. He even taught everyone The Beauty Pageant Candidate Wave, a graceful turning of the upright palm that would surely clinch any crown. You had to see it to believe it, people were waving that way until the very last day.

As the show dates crept nearer, all you could see were people sticking masking tape everywhere while actors invaded every corner and corridor to rehearse scenes. Copies upon copies of scripts, announcements, directories and, ehem, ehem, set designs were photocopied and distributed. The frenzied pace of energy swirling around was a sight to behold. Soon, the magic of blending everyone's contributions was becoming more and more concrete.

Everyone was learning from everyone else. We had to figure out how to make things work with only the materials we had. The most creative and wonderful ideas were thrown together to create a show we could all be proud of. And as the curtain fell on the very last performance, the audience applauded. We applauded with them. We applauded ourselves. We applauded each other.

The author recently won second place in the Set Design Competition sponsored by Saigon Company Manila and Cameron Mackintosh. E-mail him at waltzang@mail.com

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2bU! joins wacky races

(From page E1)

remarked.

As the night progressed, we realized that the more we got to hang out with the other participants, the more we felt incapable of the challenge. Being neophytes of the sport, we asked for tips and strategies from the main man of the race, Thumbie Remigio. Expecting a lot of sports jargon about surviving the race, we were surprised to be advised, "Don't take out the fun element of the race."

That was all we needed to hear!

Prepping up

Thanks to the kind and accommodating Neyney Guevara and Yasmin Hidalgo of PinoyCentral, Team 2bU! merged with experienced athletes from the Mountaineering Federation of the Phils. Inc. (MFPI). The new team, Team 2bU!-MFPI, was made possible by Crow Julian (team captain), Taz Biagan (racer), Yay Ortega and Doods Ulanday as support crew. Yay and Doods were supreme adventure athletes themselves, far more qualified than us two monkeys who insisted on joining the event.

Having barely 24 hours left before the race, we met at Power-Up Pasig, had our own briefing, planned our strategies and even had a crash course on rappelling and wall climbing. The initial shortage of teammates turned out to be a blessing in disguise; if we had not met these wonderful people from MFPI, we would have been doomed on June 2. After taking down mental notes on technical details, race rules and procedures, we were all set to compete and to have some fun!

D-Day

Come hell or high Manila Bay water, we were dead serious about finishing the race. Crow checked in at 6 a.m. in his bedazzling aqua leggings (the other teams cried foul, "*Bawal yan!* Distracting!"). Taz checked in with a memory of his "Alabang lover," and Doods and Yay with their spirited pom-poms and packed equipment. (Van Fernando, the supporter of our support team and No. 1 fan, was also present to provide us with his version of "iced tea.")

While unloading the bananas, the two of us cursed and panicked about our situation—what have we gotten ourselves into? Just outside the Power Plant Mall, buff and beefed-up members of other teams began to pour in. It was literally an adventure-sport community reunion where everyone knew everyone else. After much chatting, stretching, trips to the comfort room and last-minute questions between the competitors and organizers, the race finally began at 8 a.m.

Penance on Roxas Boulevard

In the first leg of the race, our fit friends, Crow and Taz, were charitable enough to volunteer themselves as joggers while we cruised 'comfortably on the two bikes with loaded backpacks. We would occasionally pause to give our joggers a sip of water and continue treading on toward Quirino Grandstand.

The only difficult part about urban biking were insane bus drivers. There were a number of marshals in strategic corners to give directions, but the route was not corded off for the racers. Translation: Bikers and joggers had to battle it out with considerate and very patient drivers face-to-face, with the nicely paved city roads to boot. While racers were given time penalties for traffic rule violations, the motorists got away with beating the red light and, oops, knocking off a racer along the way. In the middle of the sweat, nervousness and on Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, a female biker crashed into Mags and both fell to the concrete. Luckily, the minor mishap had nothing much to show but black-and-blue knees, a cut thumb and a dead nail.

In time, the much-abused Crow and Taz had to rest so they alternated the biking and jogging with Mags. Celeste was really better as a biker. Jogging on Roxas Boulevard was definitely an experience. The smell of the reputedly pristine waters of Manila Bay was better than expected, but the belching mufflers of jeeps and buses were a spoiler. While our muscles clamored for more oxygen, our lungs couldn't help but restraint themselves from taking in the pollution.

Casualty

Upon arriving at Quirino Grandstand, our checkpoint, we scrambled for our cell phone in a bid to find our support crew. Playing by the rules, Doods and Yay did not pass by Buendia and ended up tangled in traffic elsewhere. Our team spent a lot of time in the transit. Crow decided not to wait for our own equipment—life vests, harnesses, carabiners—and pushed us to proceed to the next leg of the race. While both men kayaked, we jogged a designated route and met them again by the seawall.

It was time for the "Bucket Feeling Ka?" game, where a pail (with lots of punched holes) of Manila Bay water was carried from below to fill a red bucket on the seawall. After minutes of looking stupid and wasting good effort, we discovered that the red bucket itself had punched holes in it. We scrambled to stuff our fingers and body parts into them. The wet rocks caused Crow to slip and bang his knee; our guru was in pain and didn't even show it. The only words that came out of his mouth were "Go, go! *Deretso lang!*"

RAPELLING

Team 2bU!-MFPI jogged to the Department of Tourism, somewhere by the Philippine Map Pond of Luneta. We found out that only two racers were required to rappel, so while Crow and Taz expertly boogeyed down the building, we romped straight to the cement representations of Luzon, Samar and Davao in search for answers to the second game. Meanwhile, the blue-colored sea areas, which we see in Philippine maps, were represented by murky dark water in the pond, complete with algae, weird fishes and gobbledygook we'd rather not find out.

Finish line

Contrary to Mags' theory that the way home was faster, the way back to the base camp was horrible. Roxas Boulevard seemed longer than ever. The scorching sun barbecued and dehydrated our tired bodies in the last leg of the race. Our feet were heavy as hollow blocks and the jogging never did seem to end. We would rejoice and revel whenever the traffic light would turn red as we reached an intersection; it was the perfect excuse to stop and rest. With squishy algae-soled shoes, Team 2bU!-MFPI were back in Rockwell base camp by 11:30 a.m., with resurrected spirits and strength. For the last leg, we dragged our tired bodies to the top of the artificial wall and sprinted to the finish line where we met up with our support crew.

After three-and-a-half hours of sadistic (since we volunteered for this event, let's make it masochistic) muscle torture, the team unbelievably entered the Top 10 of the Fun Category. We arrived right after Team Gameplan, popped out our San Mig Light six-pack and laughed the day's nightmares away.

Victory party

The Rockwell base camp turned into one big shindig when all the organizers, sponsors and participants of the Urban Jungle Adventure Challenge came back at around 8 p.m. to award the winners and to celebrate the success of the first-ever urban adventure race in the Philippines. The winners for the Elite category are the all-female Team Sandugo (third place), AMCI Ayala Mountaineers (second place), Team Bombproof and Team Tribu (tied at first place).

For the Fun category, Team Adobo Republic grabbed the first spot, followed by the Loyola Mountaineers as second and the ADUMS team as third. Despite sore and unbelievably unbendable body parts, Team 2bu!-MFPI stayed intact throughout the night, thanks to more supplies of San Mig Light, Van's "iced tea" and Holland sausages purchased by our support crew.

THAT LONG, LONG STRETCH: Taz and Mags jogging back home

The lovely Triccia Chiongban, who was part of Team Gameplan, hosted. The bands Color It Red and True Faith performed. Games like the fastest wall-climber game and the kooky velcrow wall were played.

Though we were handed certificates in place of the medals earlier promised to finishers, our team rejoiced in having completed the race with our heads well above the water. Our many thanks and best wishes to the hip crew of MFPI (Crow, Taz, Doods, Yay and Van) and the fabulous, warm people of PinoyCentral (Neyney and Yasmin). Perhaps we'll be seeing you again in Davao or Cebu for the second take; but rest assured that next time, we're coming prepared.

Team 2bU!-MFPI is unofficially in eighth place. Log on to www. pinoy central.com for more details, pics and perks about the first Urban Jungle Adventure Race in Manila

EUPHORIC Team 2bU!-MFPI checks in at 8th place.

So you wanna be an adventure racer?

ADVENTURE racing is becoming one of the fastest-growing sports here in the Philippines. It all started locally in Guimaras last 1998. Since then, numerous adventure and survival racing events have been organized all over the country.

Being an adventure racer is no joke. It requires a huge amount of self-preparation and team dynamics. For the wannabe adventure racers out there, we asked some people from the Mountaineering Federation of the Phils. Inc. (MFPI) to share some tips and advice on adventure racing.

- Train constantly. Don't just train a few weeks before the race. Regular training and exercise will increase your endurance and will further benefit you during the race.
- No smoking. Smoking hinders the efficiency of breathing and it can easily wear you out during cardiovascular events like swimming and running.
- Join races. As the old cliché goes, "Experience is the best teacher." The only way you can develop your skill is to join various adventure races and learn a lot from your triumphs and mistakes.
- Have fun. Don't drag yourself through the race. Enjoy the experience, give the best that you can give and don't forget to have fun!

For more tips, guides and information on extreme adventure sports, get into the action and log on to the newest website on adventure sports at http://adventure.pinoycentral.com

Who mOVes you the mOst?

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Jude Eustaquio, 13
Golfer
"I know I need to share and inspire teens like me to get into sports. Someday, I want to be one of the top golfers in the PGA Tour."

Chris de Lima, 18
Archer
"Archery teaches focus, cooperation, and responsibility. These are the real prizes."

Kim Kwok, 14
Opera singer
"If you can sing opera, you can sing just about anything else, like pop. But if you just sing pop, you can't sing opera."

Miggy Yam, 6
Soccer player
"I practice hard and do my best because I want to be like Pele."

Mazie Cajucom, 16
Actress
"I was never shy. I always wanted to perform. I believe that if you really want something, don't be afraid -- go for it."

Mich Dulce, 19
Fashion designer
"Everything around me, the people I meet, and the journeys I embark on become the inspiration for my work and craft."

Hans Dimayuga, 12
Actor
"On stage, lessons are learned, pesos are earned. Great! But the best part comes with... the curtain call!"

Celine Guillermo, 6
Painter
"I love to paint. When I grow up, I want to be a painter, ballerina and a doctor."

Pauline Baniqued, 14
Writer
"I have always felt that in a string of words is a power that touches souls, and can heal those who have been terribly hurt."

Mariel Alfonso, 12
Ballet dancer
"Dancing teaches discipline. It taught me to focus, to develop my skills. It taught me how to balance both my studies and ballet."

Cara Damian, 5
Ice skater
"I like to feel the wind on my face. I like the feeling when I'm gliding."

Paolo Bagaman, 10
Honor student and leader
"My intelligence will help me persevere in helping my parents and my country. I want to be president someday."

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